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AND

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ORIGINAL.

A Repository of the Lives and Portraits of Distinguished Americans. Vol. 1. Part I. 4to. pp. 106. Joseph Delaplaine, Philadelphia. 1816.

THE Repository labours under the common disadvantage of all works that have been too often and too ostentatiously announced. Performance, in such cases, is almost always a promise-breaker: and although we are not inclined to think disparagingly of the book now before us, we must yet be permitted to say that it is not exactly the production we had been led to expect. There is a great deal of labour about it, we admit; and the typography, as well as most of the engravings, are highly creditable to their respective authors: but we are afraid that too much has been done here to the neglect of another department,—that more regard has been paid to the qualifications of the engraver than to those of the biographer. The poor Greeks, it is true, (Pref. p. 2.) were not capable of ‘subjoining a portraiture of the body to a delineation of the mind:’ yet we question whether Mr. Delaplaine and his biographer, and his engraver together, have composed so valuable a work as might have been produced by a Plutarch alone. Nevertheless there is merit enough of one kind and another about the Repository to claim the patronage, not only of those persons, and the relations of those persons, who are either assured, or are very

sanguine in hoping, that their own biographies will occupy a place in its apartments; but of those also, who, although too humble for expectations of such exalted fortune, yet feel sufficiently interested in the promotion of American literature to incur the necessary expense of so voluminous a work. The elegant engravings which Mr. Delaplaine has been at the expense of procuring, independently of all biographical merit, would almost insure the survival of his book beyond the present times; nor ought we perhaps to be too hasty in disputing the assertions of the confident author of his 'Lives,' who tells us positively, 'that the *text shall* commemorate to posterity what, at a former period, the leading men of America thought and performed.'

We shall not enter here into any discussion concerning the general abstract utility of biographical composition: but with particular reference to the work before us, we may be permitted perhaps to say a few words upon what we conceive to be the legitimate distinction between the life of a single individual and the history of a whole nation. Every people is considered as a moral being, in which all the attributes of the human species are associated according to the ordinary rule of proportion; and in which the peculiarity of individual features is lost in the general outline of national physiognomy. Every people, at the same time, possesses marks of character which distinguish it from all its neighbours; in just the same manner that one individual differs from all the rest of his species. Again, in the subordinate divisions of the subject, each single person of a whole people, while he has the general features of the nation, is yet characteristically different from any other of his compeers; in like manner as all the crystals of the same mineral are contained in an equal number of geometrical planes; though each single crystal possesses an individuality of configuration which distinguishes it from every one of its fellows. Now the only distinction which is marked and palpable between history and biography, consists, we apprehend, in this, that the former is conversant with individuals merely in their public capacities; in their dealings with their fellow citizens, or with foreigners; where nothing is requisite or expected, but a common proportion of human qualities, tinged perhaps with a little admixture of national character: while the latter, on the other hand,

pursues the same individuals from the public office to the private station—watches them in their dealings with themselves, and can tell you whether they play with pebbles on the beach, or whether they are subject to intermittent fits of tardy and rapid perambulation. Mineralogical *history* would tell us that every crystal of the same species possessed an equal number of sides: mineralogical *biography*, if we may use the expression, would take up a single crystal and show us how the peculiar relative position of those sides was calculated to reflect the light with the minutest shades of difference from the reflections of all the others.

It is the common office of history and biography to detail the transactions of a person's public life: it is the peculiar function of the latter to tell how a person comports himself with his friends in the private circle, and with his family by the fire-side. The same observation extends also to professional life. An account of one man's success in the practice of physic, and of another in pleading at the bar, will by no means answer the chief end of biographical narrative. To say that this or that navigator was bolder and more adventurous than another—that this or that physician, this or that lawyer, this or that statesman, was more skilful, more active, more learned, more experienced than another, is merely equivalent to saying, in other departments of knowledge, that this or that crystal, this or that triangle, is greater than another. We have merely the character of the person in relation to that of his fellow-beings: whereas we want to see the individual at one time compared with the same individual at another,—to see whether he is always identical, or is not occasionally—*impar sibi*—unequal to himself.

Nor do these remarks relate to a mere *speculative* distinction between the two departments of historical literature. We are not interested to know, for instance, that a particular individual is regulated in his deportment by views of private interest; for this is a characteristic of which every man has the exemplar in his own bosom: nor do we much care to be told how desperately brave an individual may be; for he can, at the most, only possess an extraordinary share of an attribute which is found, to a certain extent, not only in all human beings, but in beings of every other description. Yet these are more properly the subjects of historical remark;

while it is the signal charm of biography, not only to enumerate those qualities which are common to the species, and which we can always observe without going from home; but to exhibit them in new lights and under new combinations, as they exist in different individuals; whose characters it is her particular office to dissect and expose. Even in historical composition, properly so called, we are always more delighted with delineations of individual character, than with the details of international transactions; and the body of biographical notes which brings up the rear of Hume, as well as the train of marginal anecdote and criticism which accompanies the march of Gibbon, are much the most amusing, and, in proportion to their volume, by no means the least instructive, parts of their respective histories.

Now this great object is not accomplished by attempting the transcription of an individual's character in the phraseology of the biographer himself:—above all, in the *ordinary* phraseology of biographers, where we are so often told that the person under consideration was this thing without being that thing—had one quality without another quality;* all of which brings us to about as instructive a result as to put a one pound weight into one scale of a balance, and a one pound weight into the other. To produce an equiponderance, the writer is obliged to chip off a great many little prominences of individuality; and we have nothing, at last, but a shapeless, mutilated remnant of the character which he is endeavouring to exhibit: or what is quite as frequently the case, he finds himself necessitated to interject a great many circumstances which are altogether extraneous to the person whom he is describing, and which are merely intended as a kind of biographical make-weight.

For all the purposes of mere history, the summary descriptions here alluded to, are abundantly sufficient; for since this department of narrative composition is only concerned with individuals as instruments of public service, where the little parts and peculiarities of character have no opportunity of exhibition—it is enough

* The following is by no means the most vicious specimen of the affected concinnity to which we are here alluding: 'Washington had religion without austerity, dignity without pride, modesty without diffidence, courage without rashness, politeness without affectation, affability without familiarity,' &c. p. 81.

that they are delineated with the brevity of general and comprehensive terms. In biography we look for something more:—we look, in short, for the character of the man as it is exhibited under his own hand and seal—in his private conversation—in his wise or witty sayings—in his familiar epistolary correspondence—in his accidental rencontres with rather inconvenient trifles, a kind of mishaps to which we have given the name of *anecdotes*. It is in these insignificant affairs that a man drops the artificial gravity of a public character; and forgets the impropriety of showing himself in the nakedness of natural disposition: it is in these, therefore, that biography finds her appropriate occupation; and very frequently, one brief anecdote, or one short observation, will place a person full before our eyes; just as the summit of a pyramidal solid will give us an idea of its configuration quite down to the base; or as the exhibition of a short arc will enable us to ascertain the whole circumference of a circle.

To those persons who have perused the Repository, we need not observe how near we are now approaching to the articles which it contains. In vain will you scan its pages for anecdotes or sayings, or familiar letters. You will see the general architectural outlines of character delineated with sufficient exactitude; but you will seek in vain for those little loop-holes through which you might view the furniture and organization of the inner man. Of Columbus and Americus we did not expect the author to give us much personal narrative of the strict biographical kind; because as they were not 'DISTINGUISHED AMERICANS,' the immediate theatre of their lives is too remote for the acquisition of all the little circumstances which home and home only, can afford. But the biographer has treated *them* exactly as he has treated all the others. As we are only permitted to see Columbus in his ship of discovery, intrepidly encountering the dangers of the boisterous ocean, and of his no less boisterous comrades—so we seldom have a view of Dr. Rush, except in the hospital of the sick, assiduously administering physic to his patients, sometimes with little mercy, and sometimes with little necessity: and hardly in a single instance are Ames, Hamilton, and Washington suffered to be seen, except in their public official capacities.

It is a very general prejudice that persons of the latter description have no private character at all—that they possess a kind of godlike port of mind (*‘ altitudo animi ’*) which never stoops to the level of vulgar humanity. It is almost inconceivable that Washington, for instance, should ever have relaxed the tension of his muscles into any thing like a common laugh: indeed we have often heard it asserted that he never *smiled* but once in his life; and that even then the beholders thought the event quite as prodigious as the superstitious Romans considered the celebrated laughter of the Etrurian ox. Now we are greatly sceptical on this point; and we are very sure that the common notion we allude to is derived from fallacious views of human nature. Queen Elizabeth had as much moral sublimity of character* as almost any person of whom we have account: yet Elizabeth was a woman: she scolded at her parliaments; she boxed the ears of her ministers; and she exhibited all the personal vanity and frivolous coquetry which distinguish the most giddy of her sex. If ever any thing idolatrous enters into our conceptions, it is when we contemplate the character of Washington: yet we are irreverent enough to believe that even Washington was a man like ourselves; and that had any pains been taken to watch or to remark his conduct on Mount Vernon, we could now be told that he did little things just as little men do. The same remark is equally applicable to Ames and Hamilton;—and of all the three we know there are now extant a sufficient number of characteristic anecdotes and familiar letters to give us a pretty thorough investigation of their private characters. This object it is in vain to think of accomplishing by a translation of the letter or anecdote in the biographer’s own language,—an expedient which is often adopted, and which regularly dissipates all that originality—that naïveté—which every man stamps upon his own expression of his own ideas. We have heard a great deal said about imitating the styles of different

* “ All the potentates of Europe regarded this enterprise (Philip’s intention to subdue England by his *Invincible Armada*) as the critical event which was to decide forever the fate of their religion; and though unable, by reason of their distance, to join their force to that of Elizabeth, they kept their eyes fixed on her conduct and fortune, and beheld with anxiety, mixed with admiration, the intrepid countenance with which she encountered that dreadful tempest which was every moment advancing towards her.—*Hume*.

authors; and most people are prone to imagine that style relates merely to the choice and structure of words:—whereas the truth is, we apprehend, that the proper definition of this term excludes in a great measure, the consideration of language, and relates almost entirely to the turn of the thoughts. Every person has his own peculiar way of thinking—his own peculiar mode of admitting and of combining ideas in the mind,—and, as language is merely the outward expression of these interior combinations, we see how dissimilarly they are formed in different minds by the various manners in which different individuals contrive to bring out the same ideas. Hence it is impossible to give any just notion of a person's turn of mind by attempting to express his thoughts in our own phraseology: and unless the biographer before us can prove that the souls of the dead sages he commemorates have absolutely *transmigrated* into his own body, we will not believe that he has given us an adequate idea of their respective characters.

But besides the misdemeanor of substituting his own language for the autographies of those whom he is describing,—the writer is chargeable with another sin of omission, in not proceeding far enough, in his own way, to subserve the beneficial purposes of biography. The practical utility of knowing how our predecessors lived and died, consists exclusively in the good effects of example upon the mind and habits of the reader. Now for this purpose it is not sufficient to be told that an individual was addicted to a particular salutary habit: we want to know the manner, the time, the place—in short, we want to know all about it. When our biographer tells us, for example, that Dr. Rush began very early to hoard up facts and thoughts in a common-place book, we derive no applicable benefit from the information; because such is our proneness to imitation and to indolence, that we had rather be without a book of this description than to think of forming it upon our own original plan. And besides this, a person who has been habitually employed in doing every day a particular act, will be able, in the course of a tolerably long life, to discover and to remove all its little attendant and circumstantial difficulties; so that at last he can instruct us by his own experience how the operation may be performed in the easiest and shortest manner. Locke, for instance, has given us a common-place book, which was the result of *his*

own practice; and which we know could not be so systematically arranged except by the successive improvements of a whole life. In like manner, we have little doubt, that the experience of Dr. Rush enabled him to discover a great many impediments, and to invent a great many facilities in the way of keeping such a diary: and even if he could not have shown us a plan of a perfect common-place book, he might, at all events, have afforded some useful hints upon a subject, of which all speculatively acknowledge, but few practically demonstrate, the importance.

This fault of not being sufficiently circumstantial in matters of this sort, is predominant in the Repository:—and indeed there is in the whole composition a deficiency of weight and force which prevents any thing useful from being driven into the mind and retained in the memory. We are inclined to attribute this peculiarity in some measure to an over-refinement in the use of language: and to think that the author has either wasted his materials by casting them over too often, or has worn away the substance by endeavouring to polish the surface.

But he has himself found it necessary to account in part for the deficiencies of which we complain. He ‘regrets that a multiplicity of circumstances beyond his control have prevented him from paying to the composition of the work that strict attention which the subjects of it required.’ Now this would have been a good apology for delaying the publication of the Repository,—but it is not an admissible excuse for publishing it imperfect. The work has been a long time in production; and, as it is one of no less than national pretension, it never should have been issued while there was any necessity for excuses. It is on account of this deficiency in the requisite ‘attention’ that we see facts sometimes misrepresented, sometimes stated with diffidence, and sometimes not stated at all. Thus we are told on page *seven*, that Columbus ‘despatched his brother Bartholomew to England, to solicit the patronage of Henry VII, for his projected voyage of discovery,—but that the English monarch possessing a character phlegmatic and cautious, rather than enterprising and vigorous, declined immediately all concern in an adventure, which, however magnificent and inviting in the view of others, appeared to him chimerical and wild—the project of a visionary rather than of an elevated

and well-balanced mind.' This is a fact, to be sure, of no great importance; but it is notorious that Henry VII was very much pleased with the undertaking of Columbus; that his hesitancy, if he showed any, in affording him patronage, was on account of some avaricious motive; and that, resolved not to be disappointed in what he thought would be so lucrative a project, he subsequently despatched Sebastian Cabot on a similar adventure, and built for the voyage the first ship in the English navy, fantastically denominated '*The Great Harry*.' In page 9, we are informed that, when the crew of Columbus was terrified at the variation of the magnetic needle, 'that great commander, with a quickness and sagacity peculiarly his own, affected to have discovered the cause of this appearance, which he gravely disclosed somewhat to the satisfaction and relief of his affrighted mariners, although very little to the solace of his own feelings, and not at all to the satisfaction of his own mind.' Now to a person who was not acquainted with the fact, that Columbus 'gravely' prevaricated with his crew by telling them how, under certain circumstances, the needle was accustomed to revolve about the magnetic pole, the sentence we have transcribed would convey no satisfactory information whatsoever. It just lifts one into expectation, to let him fall again into disappointment. The greatest diffidence which our biographer displays is in his discussion respecting the pretensions of Americus to the discovery of the continent which bears his name. He seldom ventures to be certain; but is continually escaping the responsibility of direct asseveration, through the qualifying phrases of 'he appears to have done,' 'it is understood to have been,' 'he is not considered as having' done so and so. Another instance of censurable omission, we recollect, is in the life of Ames; where the biographer is detailing the authors of whom he was particularly fond. 'Virgil among the ancient, and Shakspeare and Milton among the modern poets,' says he, 'appear to have been his favourites.' Now these authors are 'favourites' with all men of any taste: the bible is the favourite of few; yet it was the 'favourite' of Ames; and indeed, almost all his speeches appear to be a mere cento of passages taken from the Holy Writ.

Whether it be owing to the same want of attention, or to some defect more radical, we know not; but we have found a great many

other offences in the book before us which we hope will not be continued in the subsequent volumes. Nothing, for example, can betray more carelessness, or greater indiscrimination, (we hardly know which,) than the comparison, in page 10, between the respective discoveries of Columbus and Franklin: 'The only parallel which we now recollect (says our biographer, and *recollection* implies no carelessness) is the discovery of the identity of electricity and lightning, by our illustrious countryman, the late Dr. Franklin.' Now these two events cannot be brought into parallelism, neither in the difficulty of the means, nor in the importance of the results. Every school-boy can fly a kite: it was almost beyond the presumption of man to think of venturing upon the trackless waters in quest of some possible new world: and certainly the erection of a lightning-rod cannot be compared with the discovery of a continent. To the same inattention must be attributed the facility with which the author admits the story that there were 100,000 warriors in Hispaniola upon its first discovery; and that this incredible force was as incredibly dispersed by Columbus with 'two hundred men, twenty horse, and twenty wolf-dogs,' a kind of soldiers which the navigator *may* have employed; but which are certainly a novel corps for a civilized battalia. We had noted many other instances in which the author has made some very loose observations; but we have now lost the places, and we hope that a writer, who, through the whole volume appears to be so anxious to merit approbation, will be wise enough to profit by a mere cursory hint.

We cannot omit to remark one or two examples of delinquency which are attributable, not so much to a lack of attention, as to a forgetfulness of what should on all occasions be the duty of a biographer; a strict and scrupulous impartiality towards the subjects of his delineation; neither to be too much dazzled by their excellences, nor too little affected by their demerits. Throughout the volume the author has carried quite too far the principle of speaking nothing except good of the dead; but it is in the last article where his exaggeration rises the highest. We are certainly disposed to look with a complacent eye upon every thing which is calculated to exalt the character of Washington; and, though our praise is due to the author for his sincere good will in pronoun-

cing so pompous a eulogy, we think at the same time he has not taken the most effectual way of accomplishing his purpose. A temperate detail of facts would have much better answered the end of legitimate eulogium; and when the author employs the superlative degree of comparison upon all occasions, whether trivial or important, he certainly should have known that his praise, like every thing else, grows cheap by becoming profuse. It must frequently happen, likewise, that in a variety of fortune, as well adverse as successful, the resolution of never finding a certain individual in the wrong, must first or last rob some other of his appropriate praise. Thus we are told (page 87) that in superintending the evacuation of Long-island, Washington 'effected one of the most masterly retreats that is any where recorded in military annals;' and yet the biographer immediately subjoins that he was favoured by 'an unusually dark night, a fair wind, and an impenetrable fog in the morning.' Now if all this be true, then Paris 'effected a most masterly retreat, when Venus enveloped him in a cloud and snatched him from the spear and from the eyes of the confounded Menelaus. What makes this account seem the more offensive is, that but a page or two afterwards, where Washington is unsuccessful under the concurrence of the same circumstances, he himself is excused and the fog has to bear all the blame. 'But from the foginess of the morning which prevented the several parties of the assailants from acting in concert, and the occurrence of accidents from other causes that could not be foreseen, the enterprise failed.' (p. 92.) Let us not be understood as detracting in the least from the skill and courage of Washington in either of these instances: all we aim at is, to assign to each co-operative cause its appropriate share of effect, and to discredit that species of inconsistent eulogy which attributes every success to the conduct of individuals, and every failure to the occurrence of accidents.

A fault similar to that which we have just been exposing, is the frequency with which the writer alludes to the direct interposition of heaven, in the moving incidents which he relates. We may remark that to specify particular examples of interference seems to be questioning the general superintendence of the Supreme Being in the transactions of the world. We confess, at

the same time, that when danger has been avoided by some means which seem little short of miraculous, and which therefore cannot be accounted for by the ordinary course of events, it is the most natural to suppose the immediate agency of Divine Providence; but to miraculize occurrences which are in the usual order of things, and which can be explained upon known and familiar principles, is little better than to trifle with heaven, and to abuse our own understandings. It is a fault among too many biographical writers; and, in the life of Washington particularly, is a frequent subject of complaint against the author under review. The last paragraph of that article is all but idolatrous. The ancients, with all their superstitious apotheoses, were never so extravagant as to think that the countenance of a departed patriot was incapable of being imitated by the chisel or the pencil; but, on the contrary, had a profusion of copies, from both these implements of art, in order to keep as near them as possible the looks of those whom they exalted into demi-gods. Not a single Greek would have been guilty of such hyperbolical eulogium as is contained in the following sentences: 'The pencil and the chisel have vied in a laudable attempt to perpetuate his likeness. But the project has failed. Although a distinguished statuary, and the ablest portrait-painter of the age have patiently exercised their genius in the trial, Washington has never been correctly delineated. His likeness was concentrated in himself alone, and those who have never beheld it there, will search for it in vain on canvass or in marble. He was, in the true sense of the word, an original, but no correct model for imitation. He never himself copied any one; nor has any artist been able to copy him.' (p. 106. Except the last sentence, the whole of this is *original*.)

We have but one more remark to make upon the general merits of the book before us. We are altogether at a loss to account for the arrangement which the biographer has adopted. We had not an idea that a *repository* was like a receptacle of superannuated furniture, where all the articles are carelessly thrown together, without any regard to chronological priority, or to the claims of superior excellence. It was quite rational to begin with the discoverers of our continent; but if between that event and the occurrence of the Revolution, there were no distinguished

persons who merited a niche in the Repository,—certainly the claims of Washington, to be next in order, were above those of all his cotemporaries. He who was ‘first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen,’* should also have been ‘first’ in the pages of national biography.

We must now close this article with a brief examination of our author's style. And we are happy in being able to state that its faults are all on the laudable extreme,—are superfluities rather than deficiencies,—rather the effects of too much circumspection than of too great carelessness. This is a hopeful failing; as it is much easier to retract one's feet when he has gone too far, than to make an advancement when he is still short of his object. Our accusation on this head, therefore, is directed to the overscrupulosity of the author in the employment of language. He seems to be continually on his guard lest he should, before he knows it, transgress some little canon of criticism; and while he is flying from one error, he sometimes falls into another. He is too much of a historian for a biographer,—is too dignified,—uses the inverted style too much,—and is quite too often aiming at a sonorous antithesis. We would always recommend him to write thus while practising in composition for his own improvement; but to be a little more dissolute and careless in his public exhibitions;—for the same reason that the Roman soldiers used heavy weapons while they were exercising in the camp, that they might handle lighter ones with much facility when they were fighting in the field.

We think we shall be doing the author a friendly service to point out some verbal inaccuracies and other subordinate delinquencies which we have discovered in this volume.—We frequently find him taking too much pains with a figure of rhetoric. A bad effect is almost always produced, when we see a writer clearing the ground for the formal introduction of some pompous simile—

‘Or a tall met'phor in the bombast way’—

and in the lives of Americus and Hamilton we recollect to have remarked this ceremony carried to rather a ridiculous extent.

* Page 104.

The author sets apart an entire sentence for the better display of his figures, and proceeds to induct them after the following manner:—"Were it allowable (p. 25) to *borrow* a metaphor from the organization of the heavens (as if the heavens had not been the common property of writers from time immemorial) it might be aptly enough said, that, enlightened by his wisdom, invigorated by his energies, and attracted by the inherent grandeur of his intellect, they were to him (Columbus) as so many satellites moving around their central orb." Again, p. 60,—“Were we allowed the use of a brighter, and we, therefore, think a more suitable figure, we might say, that, like stars of primary magnitude, they glitter not in constellations, but in distinct and widely separated spheres.”—Nothing so much retards the progress of the narrative, and gives the whole composition such an air of fastidiousness, as these rhetorical episodes. The author is obliged to stop his legitimate business, and beg leave to introduce some formal personage whom he has been at infinite pains to hunt up,—but who, after all, turns out to be of so little service to the story, that his presence is hardly worth the search which he occasioned, or the room which he occupies.

We have sometimes remarked a confusion and mixture of different figures, which we hope not to find in the future volumes of the work. Thus in p. 30, when the author is speaking of Dr. Rush's early essays in writing,—“however rich they may be in blossom and abundant in promise (says he) they cannot present the maturity and *polish* of *finished* compositions.”—So again, in p. 49, we are told that “while engaged in his academical pursuits, the youth of Ames presented, morally and intellectually, a miniature of his manhood, exhibiting on all occasions the *germ* of that knowledge which was afterwards to *enlighten* and *direct* his fellow-citizens, and the early *flashes* of that eloquence that was destined to *electrify* the council chamber of the nation.” Now unless the author alludes by the word ‘*afterwards*’ to the distant possibility, that this *germ*, after growing through all the different stages of a tree, should at last become phosphorescent by becoming rotten, and thus perhaps be capable of exhibiting something like light in the very ‘blackness of darkness,’—we confess we see no conceivable method of making sense out of all this meta-

phor. Indeed, with every allowance, we do not perceive how a *miniature* can exhibit a *germ*, which, in its turn exhibits *flashes*, and these flashes again *electrify* a *chamber*.

In p. 4, the author calls Portugal 'the hot-bed of adventure.' Now we are aware that almost any thing may be raised in a hot-bed; but *adventures* can hardly be said to *grow* anywhere.—In the next page we are told of 'a *path* of *maritime* adventure.' A *path* is always pressed by feet; and we never heard of but one person who could walk on the sea.—We had marked a great many other instances of improper phraseology; but as we are already beyond our limits, and as an extension of such strictures would appear somewhat hypercritical, we shall draw them to a close, by merely advertising the author, in a general way, to be a little more scrupulous in the employment of words. They are light things; of course are different from each other by almost insensible grains; and require, therefore, to be weighed in a very delicate balance. We will only add here, that '*in which*,' and '*by which*' have now pretty generally superseded their old synonymes '*wherein* and *whereby*;' and that as the author has already applied to two persons the observation of their displaying in their respective capacities 'the strength of a giant with the skill of an adept,'—an expression which in itself is neither antithetical nor very replete with meaning,—we hope he will not repeat it in the future numbers of the Repository. This is, we apprehend, another effect of the excessive pains which the author has apparently taken in perfecting his composition. We have no doubt, for instance, that the final completion of the expression just quoted occasioned the author a great deal of labour; and that, when once finished, it adhered so strongly to his mind as to occur very naturally whenever there was any opportunity for its application.

We have room to particularize but one error more. There is another example of the over-refinement we have mentioned in the perpetual recurrence of balanced periods,—of expressions in which the words are yoked together, as it were in couples; and that, too, with very little regard to their congruity or agreement. We shall not make ourselves sufficiently understood but by transcribing a few expressions of this sort; and as we find the author somewhat inveterately fond of his literary *balancing*, it will re-

quire a pretty formidable array of examples to frighten him from the *wires*. We begin our extracts from page 2; but to save space we shall make no further references:—‘in drawing and history, *mathematics* and *astronomy*, *cosmography* and the *Latin tongue*’—‘esteem and gratitude, veneration and awe’—‘fatigue and exposure, hardship and famine’—‘industrious and upright, intelligent and respectable’—‘gloom and apprehension, affliction and death’—‘genius and learning, science and philanthropy’—‘instruct and delight, enlighten and adorn’—‘wisdom and ingenuity, erudition and address’—‘love and gratitude, admiration and renown’—‘observation and reflection, conversation and study’—‘wise and firm, humane and magnanimous’—‘refinement and intellect, wealth and fashion’—‘argument and remonstrance, entreaty and persuasion, terror and warning’—‘easy and elegant, affable and warm, inviting confidence and inspiring affection’—‘wisdom and judgment, patriotism and integrity’—‘unjust and haughty, dictatorial and menacing’—‘observation and reading, reflection and years’—‘ammunition and bayonets, clothes and working tools’—‘confidence and hope, satisfaction and joy,’ &c. &c. We had noted a great many other instances of this affected antithesis; but we have already carried our catalogue to an overwhelming extent; and if the author is not by this time fully divorced from his errors, we must consider him as hopeless and incorrigible. Let us not be understood as objecting to antithesis itself,—which is frequently a happy method of expression,—but to the frequency of its employment,—to the endless repetition of a good thing. We might not have noticed this fault at all, if we had not found it sometimes *thrice*, and very frequently *twice*, upon one and the same page.

We have devoted a great deal of room to the quarto before us; because we feel a considerable interest in a Biographical Repository, which is professedly national, and are anxious to contribute our little ability towards making it perfect, by a full and thorough disclosure of such faults as we find in the present, and hope not to find in the future, portions of the work. An American author, above all others, should be scrupulous in the employment of phraseology. A foreign critic would condemn a whole volume on account of a single delinquency. Give him but the least spot to

rest the fulcrum of his criticism upon, and he will overthrow a much more ponderous quarto than the one before us. To be cautious over-much, at the same time, is as productive of faults as an equal degree of carelessness;—and when we speak of scrupulosity with regard to the writer of the Repository, we use the term in a kind of inverted signification,—as meaning the care with which he would avoid the effects of his former circumspection. We will just repeat at parting, that if he will be a little more careful in his matter, and a little more careless in his style,—if he will give us more anecdotes and better authenticated facts, and if, withal, he will deliver himself in a more familiar way, by talking more like a man of this world,—we yet hope to say something more unequivocally in praise of the Repository. S.

The Life and Studies of Benjamin West, Esq. President of the Royal Academy of London, prior to his arrival in England; compiled from Materials furnished by himself. By John Galt, 8vo. pp. 160. London, 1816. In Press, by M. Thomas, Philadelphia.

THIS very interesting work consists of a series of anecdotes, told in a plain and simple way,—without any ambitious metaphors or affected antitheses. Indeed the great fault of the book is a little excess in both these particulars. Facts are frequently related with too much circumlocution; and now and then we are led astray by some details which are not altogether relevant to the story.

As we have already* given a biographical notice of Mr. West, as far as we were then acquainted with the events of his life, we shall only add here, by way of appendix, a concise detail of his commencement and progress in the art of painting. We shall, therefore, disregard the order which Mr. Galt has adopted; and leave by the way all those circumstances and anecdotes which have not an immediate reference to our undertaking. A great many ‘little things’ must be expected in the course of the narrative; and we all know that ‘little things are not valued except when they are done by those who can do greater.’

Mr. Galt, infected with the common biographical reverence for the subject of his book, is sometimes inclined to make miracles

* In our No. for July last.

of ordinary occurrences;—an inclination which nowhere manifests itself so strongly as in his account of the circumstances attending the birth of Mr. West. We are told that a minister, by the name of Peckover, was preaching in the church at Springfield,—when, in the midst of a vehement and lofty prediction of the splendid destinies which awaited the Americans, Mrs. West was taken with the pains of labour; was delivered of our artist; and thus contributed to the fulfilment of the prophecy. The simple truth is, we suppose, that, frightened by the violence of the sermon, Mrs. West,—like thousands of other women, of whom history is full of accounts,—was brought to rather a premature parturition; and that when the circumstances were told to Peckover, he was so much delighted with the effect of his preaching as to assure the parents that their son was of no ordinary cast.—We shall begin our story at the epoch when the pictorial talents of Mr. West first began to develop themselves.

While yet a mere child, he was one day placed as a guard over his sister's infant, while its mother, together with his own, had gone into the garden. The child happened to smile in its sleep, and Benjamin was so much affected with the appearance, that he immediately snatched up some paper which was lying on the table, and with nothing but a little red and black ink, began to sketch its little portrait. While in the very act of delineation, his mother and sister entered the room:—he heard their approach and endeavoured to conceal his paper; but his mother perceived his confusion, and requested to know what he was about. A mother's request is equal to a command: and, entreating her not to be angry, he reluctantly produced and gave up his paper. 'I declare (says she to her daughter) he has made a likeness of little Sally;' and immediately quieted the apprehensions, and rewarded the ingenuity of Benjamin with an affectionate kiss. At this time he was but *seven* years of age; and had never seen a picture in his life. Shortly after this incident he was sent to school; where, during his leisure hours, he was permitted to draw figures with the humble materials of a pen and ink.

"In the course of the summer a party of Indians came to pay their annual visit to Springfield (his native place), and being amused with the sketches of birds and flowers which Benjamin had shown them, they taught him to prepare the red and yellow colours with which they painted their ornaments. To

these his mother added blue, by giving him a piece of indigo, so that he was thus in possession of the three primary colours." p. 18.

"His drawings at length attracted the attention of the neighbours; and some of them happening to regret that the Artist had no pencils, he inquired what kind of things these were, and they were described to him as small brushes made of camels' hair fastened in a quill. p. 19.

There were no camels in Springfield; and our artist was in considerable perplexity about a substitute,—when his father's favourite black cat happened to cross his path. It occurred to him that cat's hair might be as good as camels' hair; and accordingly he armed himself with his mother's scissors, seized Grimalkin, docked off the tip of her tail, fixed it in a quill,—and thus constructed his very first pencil. But the artist was as indefatigable then as we are told he is now; and as the tail of the cat could furnish only one pencil, he was obliged to extend his depredations to the back; which in a short time was reduced to perfect baldness, and Benjamin's father lamented the condition of his poor favourite, as being the effect of some disease. 'The Artist, with suitable marks of contrition, informed him of the true cause; and the old gentleman was so much amused with his ingenuity, that if he rebuked him, it was certainly not in anger.'

In the following year, Mr. Pennington, a relation of the old gentleman's, came to pay him a visit; and knowing that Mr. West, as well as himself, belonged to the society of quakers,—whose radical principle is a dislike of ornament,—he was somewhat surprised to see the house hung around with drawings of flowers and birds; but was fairly astonished upon being told that they were the production of his little cousin, Benjamin. He was no connoisseur; but common sense was competent to teach him that such pictures were not the work of an *ordinary* boy at eight years of age; and, resolved to second the exertions of his young relation, by furnishing him with materials more adequate to his genius, he promised to send him from Philadelphia a box of paints and pencils.

"The arrival of the box (which Mr. P. had accompanied by six engravings of Grevling, and several pieces of canvass prepared for the easel) formed an era in the history of the painter and his art. It was received with feelings of delight which only a similar mind can justly appreciate. He opened it, and

in the colours, the oils, and the pencils, found all his wants supplied, even beyond his utmost expectations. But who can describe the surprise with which he beheld the engravings; he who had never seen any picture but his own drawings, nor knew that such an art as the engraver's existed! He sat over the box with enamoured eyes; his mind was in a flutter of joy; and he could not refrain from constantly touching the different articles, to ascertain that they were real. At night he placed the box on a chair near his bed, and as often as he was overpowered by sleep, he started suddenly and stretched out his hand to satisfy himself that the possession of such a treasure was not merely a pleasing dream." p. 22.

He arose at day-light, and carried his box up to a garret; where he made preparation and began to imitate the engravings. School was forgot; and so was every thing else, till he heard the signal for dinner. He said nothing about his truantship; and, in the afternoon again—instead of going to school—he retreated to his hiding-place, and recommenced his labours with the pencil. The same practice was continued for several days; and at length the school-master sent a message to inquire the cause of Benjamin's absence. His mother had accidentally seen him going up stairs after breakfast; and, shrewdly suspecting the box was at the bottom of his delinquency, silently ascended to the garret and surprised him in the midst of his labours. Her anger was appeased when she saw,—not a copy merely of one of the originals,—but a composition of two,—so tastefully united, and so scientifically coloured, 'that the most skilful artist, assisted by the precepts of Newton, would not have been ashamed to own the production.' 'Sixty-seven years afterwards the writer of these memoirs had the gratification to see this piece in the same room with the sublime painting of "Christ Rejected," on which occasion the painter declared to him that there were inventive touches of art in his first and juvenile essay, which, with all his subsequent knowledge and experience, he had not been able to surpass.'

Mr. Pennington now paid Mr. West another visit; and was so highly pleased with the effect of his present, that he persuaded the old gentleman to allow Benjamin to spend a few days with him in Philadelphia. Every new object in the city excited "the fond, attentive gaze of young astonishment;" but the youthful artist was the most affected by a sight of the shipping. He must

be busy, though merely on a visit. Mr. P. furnished him with materials; and his second picture was an original design of a landscape—of which, as might be conjectured, the vessels in the water formed a conspicuous part.* During his residence in Philadelphia, Mr. P. procured, on purpose for Benjamin, an elegant picture, executed by one Williams, a painter. The young artist was extraordinarily effected at its first exhibition; and his sensibility on the occasion attracted the attention of Williams; who was thence induced to ask him a great many questions about his education—and among the rest, ‘whether he had read any books, or lives of great men?’ ‘I have read the Bible (answered the young and simple amateur), and know the history of Adam, Joseph, David, Solomon, and all the other great men in the Scriptures.’ Williams became quite interested in his welfare; and besides inviting him to see his paintings, kindly lent him Fresnoy and Richardson on Painting. Benjamin had not yet determined upon a profession:—the perusal of these works fixed his vacillating choice; and thenceforward there was a visible alteration in his whole demeanor. The anecdotes in Fresnoy and Richardson had inspired him with the dignity of his future profession: he thought he was destined ‘to be the companion of kings and emperors;’ and, when he was going on horseback with one of his school-fellows, to visit a neighbouring plantation, he not only insisted on riding before, but when he asked his companion what profession *he* had chosen, and was answered that he intended to be a taylor—‘a taylor!’ exclaimed Benjamin—‘then (leaping from the horse) you may ride by yourself.’ This incident, together with the affair of the picture, was soon bruited among his school-fellows; who, with their usual facility of changing amusements, relinquished the bat and the ball,—and it was but a short time ere the board-fences and sides of the school-house were covered with the rude figures of this infant ‘Royal Academy,’ with Benjamin West at its head.

Our artist’s next essay was upon some boards of the poplar-tree, which he had procured at the shop of a neighbouring cabinet-maker. Although he was obliged to use the inadequate materials of ink, chalk, and charcoal, his drawings on this new substitute for canvass were such as to attract the notice of Mr.

* The Picture is now in the Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts.

Wayne, a gentleman of Springfield, and to induce a request on his part that he might be permitted to carry home two or three of the boards. The next day he paid Benjamin a great many compliments, and one dollar a-piece for the pictures. Doctor Jonathan Moris, another neighbour, presented him, soon after, with a few dollars for the purchase of better materials than those he had hitherto been compelled to use. These two gentlemen were his first public patrons; and their names have been mentioned by his own particular request.

About a year after his visit to Philadelphia, a Mr. Fowler, who possessed some taste in painting, requested Mr. West to allow Benjamin to spend a few weeks at his house. Mr. F. had lately lost his domestic partner; and had procured an English governess to educate his daughters. She was a lady of discernment; and soon discovered and duly appreciated the original bias of Benjamin's mind. He was invited to sit with her pupils, and to hear some of the most striking and picturesque passages of the ancient poets and historians. 'It was from this intelligent woman that he heard, for the first time, of the Greeks and Romans; and the impression which the story of these illustrious nations made on his mind, was answerable to her expectations.'

In the neighbouring town of Lancaster there was a lawyer by the name of Ross, whose wife and children were so beautiful as to be the objects of general remark; and, by the persuasion of Mr. Fowler, he was induced to have their portraits taken by young Benjamin West. The success of our artist in this undertaking contributed to enlarge the circle of his celebrity; and applications for portraits became so numerous, that he with difficulty found time to satisfy all his admirers. Among the other applicants was a man by the name of William Henry,—a mechanic, of 'a handsome fortune,' who, for a person in his walk of life, possessed an extraordinary taste in almost every department of learning. He soon perceived that Benjamin was too good a painter to be wasting his time upon portraits; and, in order to see him engaged in some historical work, his new patron suggested the Death of Socrates, as affording a fine subject for the exhibition of moral effect. He accordingly read from Plutarch the passage which contains an account of that event; and this description, aided by

his own imagination, enabled the artist to draw an outline of the chief circumstances attending the philosopher's death. Mr. H. was pleased with the sketch; and requested him to fill up the picture:—but he objected, that, as he had heretofore painted only the faces of men who were clothed, he feared he should not be able to delineate the slave presenting the poison, who he supposed should be naked. Mr. H. was resolved that such an objection should not long retard his progress; and calling in one of his own slaves,—‘there (says he) is your model.’ ‘The appearance of the young man, whose arms and breast were naked, instantaneously convinced the artist that he had only to look into nature for the models which would impart grace and energy to his delineation of forms.’

The ‘Death of Socrates’ was the means of procuring our artist a fortunate acquaintance with Dr. Smith, at that time provost of the college in this city,—who was invited by the Lancastrians to arrange a course of instruction for an academy which they had just been founding; and who, upon observing the merits of the picture in question, promised to undertake the classical education of the painter, and to make him sufficiently conversant with the spirit and taste of antiquity to subserve all the purposes of the profession which he intended to follow. His parents, as may be supposed, made few objections to the proposal; and Benjamin was soon after transferred from Springfield to Philadelphia. He resided at the house of Mr. Clarkson, his brother-in-law; and began a course of classical education, under Dr. Smith, which was particularly adapted to his destined profession. Instead of pursuing any system of grammatical exercises, he was directed immediately to those passages in ancient history which are calculated to make the most lasting impression on the mind.

When Benjamin had arrived at his sixteenth year, his father became anxious to place him in some regular business; and although reluctant to thwart the natural bias of his son; yet quakerism was inconsistent with devotion to the fine arts; and he thought himself bound, therefore, to engage him in an occupation more congenial to the principles of his sect. Several of his neighbours were consulted upon the subject,—and finally a meeting of the society was called, in order to settle the destination of young West.

After much altercation and debate, a speech from one John Williamson determined the suffrage of the Friends in favour of Benjamin's choice; and a private meeting was subsequently holden at his father's house, to confer on him the assent and blessing of the society. Here again John Williamson addressed his brethren and sisters,—employing all the ordinary considerations in favour of indulging a youth in the profession of that business which seems the best to comport with the original bent of his mind; and going into a pretty subtle disquisition upon the providence of God, in order to remove the prejudices of his friends against every thing unnecessary and ornamental. At the conclusion of his harangue, 'the women rose and kissed the young artist, and the men, one by one, laid their hands on his head and prayed that the Lord might verify in his life the value of the gift which had induced them, in despite of their religious tenets, to allow him to cultivate the faculties of his genius.'

Shortly after this benediction he removed to Lancaster:—but soon returned on hearing intelligence of his mother's severe illness; and entered the paternal roof just in time to catch her last expiring look. In August, 1756, he took his final departure for Philadelphia; where, with the exception of a short military expedition, he continued to spend his regular hours in the execution of portraits, and his leisure time in the acquisition of classical knowledge. He soon became sensible, however, that, except in mechanical facility, he should never make much progress in the art of painting, by the mere contemplation of his own pictures; and as there were at that time but very few works of other artists in the infant colony, he resolved to adopt a rigorous system of economy, in order, if possible, to enable him at a future day to visit foreign countries for the improvement of his pictorial talent.—It happened that a painting of St. Ignatius, executed according to the principles of the Morillo school, was taken the preceding year on board a Spanish prize; and was then in the possession of Mr. Hamilton, the governor of the colony. Of this Mr. Pennington obtained permission for West to take a copy. The success of our artist in this undertaking suggested to Dr. Smith the idea, in which he had been anticipated by Sir Joshua Reynolds, that portrait-painting might be exalted above the mere representation

of physical likeness, by exhibiting the personage in some interesting character; and accordingly he was induced to have his own portrait drawn by West, in the style and attitude of St. Ignatius.

A gentleman, by the name of Cox, called soon after to engage a likeness of his daughter:—but when he was shown the picture of provost Smith,—instead of making the intended application for his daughter's portrait, he gave an order for a historical painting. The biblical reading of West had furnished him with a great many interesting subjects; among which he chose for his present purpose the Trial of Susannah. On a canvas about the size of a half length portrait he represented no less than forty figures,—all of which were taken, as in the death of Socrates, from living originals.

But notwithstanding his success in these two historical essays, he became every day more and more impressed with the necessity of visiting foreign countries, in order to enlarge his views of nature, and to improve his native genius by investigating the paintings of those who were the great masters of his art. At present, however, the paucity of his funds enabled him to go no further than New York; where, although he had abundant applications for portraits, he yet found the society too mercantile for the cultivation and refinement of painting.

“He happened, during his residence there, to see a beautiful Flemish picture of a hermit praying before a lamp, and he was resolved to paint a companion to it, of a man reading by candle light. But before he discovered a method of producing, in day-light, an effect on his model similar to what he wished to imitate, he was frequently baffled in his attempts. At length, he hit on the expedient of persuading his landlord to sit with an open book before a candle in a dark closet; and he found that, by looking in upon him from his study, the appearance was exactly what he wished for. In the schools and academies of Europe, tradition has preserved the methods by which all the magical effects of light and shadow have been produced, with the exception, however, of Rembrandt's method, and which the author of these sketches ventures to suggest was attained, in general, by observing the effect of sunshine passing through chinks into a dark room. But the American artist was as yet unacquainted with any of them, and had no other guides to the essential principles of his art, but the delicacy of his sight, and that ingenious observation of Nature to which allusion has been already so often made. p. 82, 83.

Soon after he made a copy from an engraving by Strange, of a painting of Belisarius, by Salvator Rosa. "It is not known what has now become of these pictures; but when the author long after saw the original of Salvator Rosa, he was gratified to observe that he had instinctively coloured his copy almost as faithfully as if it had been painted from the picture instead of the engraving."

We are now to accompany our countryman to Italy. The events of his departure with a Mr. Allen, and of the many difficulties he encountered on the voyage, though very interesting as personal anecdotes, are very little connected with his progression in the art of painting, and must, therefore, be omitted in what we can yet find room to detail. It suffices to say, that he arrived at Rome on the 10th of July, 1760, and that he had introductory letters to some of the most eminent personages in Italian society. Among the rest he was soon made acquainted with the celebrated Cardinal Albani.

"His eminence, although quite blind, had acquired by the exquisite delicacy of his touch, and the combining powers of his mind, such a sense of ancient beauty, that he excelled all the virtuosi then in Rome, in the correctness of his knowledge of the verity and peculiarities of the smallest medals and intaglios. Mr. Robinson conducted the artist to the inner apartment, where the cardinal was sitting, and said, "I have the honour to present a young American, who has a letter of introduction to your eminence, and who has come to Italy for the purpose of studying the fine arts." The cardinal fancying that the American must be an Indian, exclaimed, "Is he black or white?" and on being told that he was very fair, "What as fair as I am?" cried the cardinal still more surprised. This latter expression excited a good deal of mirth at the cardinal's expense, for his complexion was of the darkest Italian olive, and West's was even of more than the usual degree of English fairness. For some time after, if it be not still in use, the expression of "as fair as the cardinal" acquired proverbial currency in the Roman conversations, applied to persons who had any inordinate conceit of their own beauty.

"The cardinal, after some other short questions, invited West to come near him, and running his hands over his features, still more attracted the attention of the company to the stranger, by the admiration which he expressed at the form of his head. This occasioned inquiries respecting the youth; and the Italians concluding that, as he was an American, he must, of course, have received the education of a savage, became curious to witness the effect which the works of art in the Belvidere and Vatican would produce on him. The whole

company, which consisted of the principal Roman nobility, and strangers of distinction then in Rome, were interested in the event; and it was arranged in the course of the evening that on the following morning they should accompany Mr. Robinson and his protégé to the palaces.

"At the hour appointed, the company assembled; and a procession, consisting of upwards of thirty of the most magnificent equipages in the capital of Christendom, and filled with some of the most erudite characters in Europe, conducted the young quaker to view the master-pieces of art. It was agreed that the Apollo should be first submitted to his view; because it was the most perfect work among all the ornaments of Rome, and, consequently, the best calculated to produce that effect which the company were anxious to witness. The statue then stood in a case, enclosed with doors, which could be so opened as to disclose it at once to full view. West was placed in the situation where it was seen to the most advantage, and the spectators arranged themselves on each side. When the keeper threw open the doors, the artist felt himself surprised with a sudden recollection altogether different from the gratification which he had expected; and without being aware of the force of what he said, he exclaimed, "My God, how like it is to a young Mohawk warrior!" The Italians, observing his surprise, and hearing the exclamation, requested Mr. Robinson to translate to them what he said; and they were excessively mortified to find that the god of their idolatry was compared to a savage. Mr. Robinson mentioned to West their chagrin, and asked him to give some more distinct explanation, by informing him what sort of people the Mohawk Indians were. He described to him their education; their dexterity with the bow and arrow; the admirable elasticity of their limbs; and how much their active life expands the chest, while the quick breathing of their speed in the chace, dilates the nostrils with that apparent consciousness of vigour which is so nobly depicted in the Apollo. "I have seen them often," added he, "standing in that very attitude, and pursuing, with an intense eye, the arrow which they had just discharged from the bow."* This descriptive explanation did not lose by Mr. Robinson's translation. The Italians were delighted, and allowed that a better criticism had rarely been pronounced on the merits of the statue." pp. 103, 4, 5, 6.

This is certainly an interesting account of Mr. West's first introduction to the idols of his art;—and we have been induced to extract it entire, both because the incidents are so linked together that a part would have appeared imperfect, and because we found it given so concisely as to baffle our attempts at abridgment. We can only add, in our own language, that Mr. West was not, at first, very much stricken with the works of Raphael; and that,

* *Far-shooting*, we may note, is one of the epithets which Homer bestows upon Apollo.

with the single exception of the Moses, he still continues to think that the pictures of Michael Angelo are stamped with a character of improbability.

He had not remained long in Rome before he was introduced to Mengs, the most popular painter at that time in Italy. After becoming sufficiently familiar, he begged West to show him a specimen of his drawing;—but, as our artist had never learned to draw, he concluded to substitute a portrait of Mr. Robinson for a picture of his own invention. Before he exhibited it to Mengs, however, he was anxious to see what would be the suffrage of the public; and accordingly it was placed in an appropriate frame, suspended in the chamber of Mr. Crespigné, where a grand assembly was about to be held, and perfect secrecy, as to the author, was enjoined, upon all those who were acquainted with the fact. The picture soon attracted notice: it was known that Mr. Robinson had been sitting to Mengs; the amateurs perused the portrait with the most scrupulous attention; and every body was unanimous that the artist never coloured better in his life. Mr. Dance, a shrewd Englishman, expressed an opinion that the picture was coloured much better than was usual with Mengs; while he thought, at the same time, that the drawing was not so firm or so good as his ordinary execution. This criticism occasioned a pretty sharp reply from a Mr. Jenkins, and the company were soon attracted around the picture to hear the altercation of the two amateurs. Mr. Crespigné seized the moment, and told Jenkins that Dance was in the right; for, in fact, the picture was not painted by Mengs. “By whom then?” vociferated the company—“for there is no other artist now in Rome who could execute any thing so good.” “By that young gentleman there”—answered Mr. C. pointing to West,—who had taken his seat behind a sofa, and was listening with much agitation to the strictures of the critics. When Mengs saw the portrait, he told the author that he had no occasion to learn painting at Rome; and advised him, after viewing all the models of his art in that place, to visit Florence, Bologna, Parma, and Venice; and, upon his return, to determine the line of his profession, by exhibiting a historical picture to the Roman public. This advice was followed; and after performing the tour Mr. West augmented his celebrity by

painting the two historical pictures of Cimon and Iphigenia, and Angelica and Madona. After remaining in Rome about three years, he started for England; stopping in the places through which he passed, particularly in Paris, long enough to view all the specimens of his art which they might contain. The rest has been told already.

From all this, it appears that, from the very beginning—from the sketch of little Sally's portrait, to the representation of Christ Healing the Sick, Mr. West has been an original, and partly a self-taught painter. He disdained a servile imitation of the first picture he ever saw; and while he was in Italy, in the very midst of all that painters hold dear, he was no extravagant admirer of any particular master; but while he fully appreciated the excellences of their respective productions, he was sensible of their defects; and was continually recurring from the copies of art to the originals of nature. This characteristic, coupled with his incessant application, has contributed to make Mr. West one of the greatest artists of the age.

We cannot part with this very interesting memoir without quoting an anecdote of Washington, which displays the full features of his character better than a whole quarto of pompous biography:—

“Provost Smith was himself possessed of a fluent vein of powerful eloquence, and it happened that many of his pupils who distinguished themselves in the great struggle of their country, appeared to have imbibed his talent; but none of them more than Jacob Duchey, another of the four youths whom he recommended to the artist. He became a clergyman, and was celebrated throughout the whole of the British provinces in America as a most pathetic and persuasive preacher. The publicity of his character in the world was, however, chiefly owing to a letter which he addressed to General Washington, soon after his appointment to the chief command of the army. The purport of this letter was to persuade the general to go over to the British cause. It was carried to him by a Mrs. Ferguson, a daughter of doctor Graham, a Scottish physician in Philadelphia. Washington, with his army, at that time lay at Valley-forge, and this lady, on the pretext of paying him a visit, as they were previously acquainted, went to the camp. The general received her in his tent with much respect, for he greatly admired the masculine vigour of her mind. When she had delivered the letter he read it attentively, and, rising from his seat, walked backwards and forwards upwards of an hour, without speaking. He appeared to be much agitated during the greatest part of the time; but at length, having

decided with himself, he stopped, and addressed her in nearly the following words: "Madam, I have always esteemed your character and endowments, and I am fully sensible of the noble principles by which you are actuated on this occasion; nor has any man in the whole continent more confidence in the integrity of his friend than I have in the honour of Mr. Duchey. But I am here entrusted by the people of America with sovereign authority. They have placed their lives and fortunes at my disposal, because they believe me to be an honest man. Were I, therefore, to desert their cause, and consign them again to the British, what would be the consequence? to myself perpetual infamy; and to them endless calamity. The seeds of everlasting division are sown between the two countries; and, were the British again to become our masters, they would have to maintain their dominion by force, and would, after all, retain us in subjection only so long as they could hold their bayonets to our breasts. No, madam, the proposal of Mr. Duchey, though conceived with the best intention, is not framed in wisdom. America and England must be separate states; but they may have common interests, for they are but one people. It will, therefore, be the object of my life and ambition to establish the independence of America in the first place; and in the second, to arrange such a community of interests between the two nations as shall indemnify them for the calamities which they now suffer, and form a new era in the history of nations. But, madam, you are aware that I have many enemies: congress may hear of your visit, and of this letter, and I should be suspected were I to conceal it from them. I respect you truly, as I have said; and I esteem the probity and motives of Mr. Duchey, and therefore you are free to depart from the camp, but the letter will be transmitted without delay to congress." pp. 40, 41, 42, 43.

ON THE DISADVANTAGES OF PRINTING.

THE benefits afforded by the art of printing to science, literature, morals and freedom, have long been a favorite and fruitful theme of panegyric. To point out one of the disadvantages attending that celebrated invention is the purpose of the present essay.

When books could only be multiplied by means of manuscript copies, it was indispensable to their reputation that they should be written with the greatest care. The labour of reading such volumes was to be overcome by the interest of the subject, or the charm of the style: and the expense of transcribing them was so great, that none but excellent works could obtain an extensive cir-

culatation. On this account the writers of antiquity were frequently obliged to recite their own compositions in public. Those who were opulent could collect admiring audiences; while the others, especially the unfortunate bards, were sometime unable to obtain either purchasers or auditors for their productions. But the publicity which many works acquired in this manner would enable their authors to improve them before they were published in volumes. The young authors, too, who have seldom been rich in any age or country, were probably obliged for some time to copy their own works; and they would naturally endeavour, in order to diminish the labour of so disagreeable a task, to cultivate terseness and brevity of style. But whether a writer copied his manuscript, or employed an amanuensis for that purpose, each new copy became, as it were, a new edition of the work, susceptible of whatever amendments the author's own judgment, or the criticism of others, might suggest.

To these circumstances, we may in a great degree attribute the remarkable correctness of the classical writers. Their periods are finished to faultlessness. Their phrases are pregnant with meaning. They seem to have been studious of crowding the greatest possible quantity of thought into the smallest possible number of words: and hence their writings have acquired a monumental solidity that promises a duration beyond all the other works of man.

It is chiefly in this precision, terseness and energy of style, that our modern authors are excelled by those of antiquity. How many historians have we who, in vigour and subtilty of intellect, in moral and political philosophy, in general knowledge, and perhaps in genius, are equal or superior to Herodotus, Sallust, Livy, or even to Tacitus himself; but how few of the former can we compare with them in the immaculate style of their language?

The ancient authors could employ their whole lives in perfecting their writings; whereas those whose works are circulated by the press can only correct them, after the first publication, when new editions are demanded. But the improvements we now find in a book which has gone through four or five editions, are not more than what might be expected—were printing unknown—after a hundred manuscript copies of it had been made.

Our writers may indeed correct their works while in the press: though this cannot be done without much annoyance. The bookseller complains of the increased expense; the printer is vexed at what he considers an unnecessary delay; the compositor grumbles at his additional labour, (although he is paid for it) and even the printer's devil growls at being obliged to run back and forwards with the proof sheets. To avoid this persecution, the author is often induced to let his pages go to press in an imperfect state.

As a remedy for the evil in question, we beg leave to propose a rule, much less severe than the well known precept of Horace. Instead of urging an author to the hard forbearance of keeping his piece from the public, and withholding his own name from celebrity, for the long term of *nine years*, we recommend him to copy his piece *three times* at least; and if his taste be not vicious, or his vanity incorrigible, we venture to predict that the last copy would not contain many unnecessary expressions. The labour of copying is wonderfully efficacious in diminishing the length of one's periods.

The modern writers most distinguished for their style have all been laborious correctors of their works. Hume spent years in improving and polishing his essays, which nevertheless would seem, from the perspicuous simplicity of their style, to have been written with very little effort. Robertson is said to have composed his histories on small slips of paper, and to have perfected each sentence before he proceeded to a new one. Rousseau tells us in his confessions that he always transcribed several times whatever he intended for the press; and that the *Nouvelle Heloise*, the most eloquent and beautiful of all his works, was frequently copied by him for the perusal of his friends and patrons before it was published. Burke, too, the Cicero of our age, was careful almost to fastidiousness in the correction of his writings. His letter to the duke of Bedford, consisting of only a few sheets, was three months in the press, and was so often altered by him during that time, that the expense of printing it amounted to ten times more than it would have cost, if it had been printed without alteration.

Let us suppose that printing were forever abolished: how small a proportion of our literature would survive that noble art: how few, comparatively, would be the books we should be at the expense of purchasing, and the pains of perusing in manuscript volumes. After the lapse of a few centuries from the destruction of the press, there probably would not remain in general circulation more than one out of a hundred of those works which are now found in every extensive library: but this remnant of our literature would, like the productions of Greek and Roman genius now extant, be the admiration of all after ages.

It is not easy to account for the great difference between the impressions made by the same thought when very well, and when very poorly expressed. We are, however, made sensible of that difference by the publications we daily peruse, and even in our familiar conversations with each other. Style, indeed, seems as important to a writer, as elocution and action to an orator. A badly written book, and a coldly delivered discourse, will equally fail of success, however valuable the matter which the one or the other may contain. On the other hand, how many productions, especially of the poetical kind, have obtained celebrity without any other beauty than that of language to recommend them; and how many speeches are listened to with pleasure when delivered with a fine elocution, and animated gestures; but which, when they appear in print, are insipid, or even nauseous.

These considerations, we trust, will induce the powerful and aspiring writers of our own country to pay more attention than they have hitherto given to the attainment of a fine style, and not to disdain the humble, but very important task of correcting and copying their manuscripts. They may thus overcome the inconvenience which it is the object of this essay to describe and provide against; and entertain the cheering hope that their names will be associated with those of the illustrious classic authors, and their works handed down to the remotest posterity, to instruct and delight the innumerable nations of our race, to whom our language is destined to convey the first lessons of religion, virtue, and freedom.



CHRONICLE.

SYNOPSIS OF NAVAL ACTIONS,

DURING THE LATE WAR, BETWEEN BRITISH AND AMERICAN
VESSELS.

(Continued, from our July number, from the British Naval Chronicle.)

"WE next have the pleasure of recounting the capture of a very formidable South sea cruiser, of tar and feathering memory—no less a personage than the boisterous champion of "free trade and sailors' rights"—Mr. David Porter. His frigate, the Essex, is, I trust, safe in a British port. The particulars of her capture have already been detailed in the public prints. Unlike all the letters of the *American* "heroes" captain Hillyar makes no boast of succeeding in a contest in which he was so evidently superior. We wish, for his sake, the Cherub had been absent. As it was, the following estimate of the force engaged will show that the numbers were not quite so disproportionate, as between our three frigates and their opponents: and yet those actions were blazoned forth, from one end of the Union to the other, as "splendid victories," "brilliant achievements," and even with unblushing hardihood—*equal* combats!

PHOEBE.

(Rating 36, mounting 44 guns.)

Broadside.

Maindeck	13	18lb. long guns	-	-	234lbs.
Quarterdeck and fore-castle	1	9lb. do.	-	-	9
	7	32lb. carronades	-	-	224
					<hr/>
					467lbs.

Brought over, - - - - 467lbs.

CHERUB.

(Rating 20, mounting 28 guns.)

Broadside.

Maindeck 9	32lb. carronades	-	-	288lbs.
Quarterdeck and	4	18lb. do.	-	72
forecastle	1	6lb. long gun	-	6
				<hr/>
				366lbs.
				<hr/>
Total				833lbs.

Phœbe—men and boys 300 }
Cherub do. 135 } 435.

ESSEX.

(Rating 32, mounting 46 guns.)

Broadside.

Maindeck 13	32lb. carronades,	-	-	416lbs.
Quarterdeck and	7	32lb. do.	-	224
forecastle	3	12lb. long guns,	-	36
				<hr/>
				676lbs.

Men, with those that escaped ashore, - 300.

Superiority on the British side.

In weight of metal, as six to five.

Number of men, not quite three to two.

“I am here supposing our ships to have each their full complement, which probably was not the case. The Essex, when she left the Delaware in October, 1812, had 376 prime seamen. In killed and wounded our loss was very trifling—about 15. The enemy very severe—about 152. He certainly made a brave defence; but it might have been told with a better grace by any other person than himself. His letter is of immoderate length—contains many inconsistencies and much foul language against captain Hillyar. We may allow him to be a little angry, that notwithstanding his cautious plans, the commander of the Phœbe should just nick the time of his being at Valparaiso. Another proof of the judgment of the American government in building such *sloops* of war as the Wasp, Frolic, and Peacock, has unfortunately occurred in the capture of the Reindeer brig by the first named vessel on the 28th of June, 1814. Never was a ship more ably defended than this ill-fated brig, nor British gallantry more fully displayed than in the unavailing efforts of her heroic crew. All that could be done was done. Poor Manners! thine was a noble spirit; but the unerring rifle set thee at rest ere the proud union of thy country was lowered from the peak. Where would the Wasp have been now, had there been, in men and metal, only a slight odds in her favour?

“Originally, the Reindeer, like other brigs of her class, mounted thirty-two pounders, carronades; but it appears she lost part of

them in a gale of wind, and leaving the remainder in port, took on board a full set of twenty-fours. She was built of fir in 1814, and had long outlived her contract. She had, it is stated, 20 boys in her crew. Her full compliment was 121; which we shall allow her to have had on board.

"The Wasp's force, in guns and men, we are enabled correctly to give. Her commander is highly spoken of. The following particulars will place this action in a proper point of view:

REINDEER.		WASP.	
(Rating 18, mounting the same.)		(Rating 18, mounting 22 guns.)	
<i>Broadside.</i>		<i>Broadside.</i>	
8 24lb. carronades,	192lbs.	10 32lb. carronades,	320lbs.
6 6lb. long guns,	36	1 18lb. long gun,	18
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	228lbs.		338lbs.
Men and boys, 121.		Men of the usual quality, 175.	
Measurement, under 385 tons.		Measurement, above (English) 550 tons.	

Superiority on the American side.

In weight of metal, as seven to four.

In number of men, as seven to five.

In size of vessel, as seven to five.

"Our loss in killed and wounded is stated to have been fifty or sixty, the enemy's thirty. Owing to the expertness of twenty-six marines stationed in the tops for the purpose, all the Reindeer's officers, except the captain's clerk, were picked off and killed, or disabled. The brig herself was so much shattered as to be destroyed after the action.

"On the 11th July, 1814, the Rattlesnake, of 16 guns, 24's and 9's, and 131 men, was taken by the Leander frigate. She had a very choice crew. The officers and men had iron helmets, or skull-caps, to fend off the lusty coup-de-sabres of British boarders, with the motto in front "Don't give up the ship."

"While the Rattlesnake and Enterprize (of similar force) were out in company, they obtained information that our brig, the Dotterel, was cruising off Charleston with a crew of sixty men, and those weakly and discontented. A plan was formed to be in concert—satisfied that 260 men would quickly overpower sixty, or even three times the number. It is doubted whether the Enterprize had all her guns on board. However, after many hours of anxious look-out the two heroes were chased away by the Morgiana of 18 guns—16 24lb. carronades and 2 small long guns, with a crew of at least ten men under the half of what were on board the enemy's brigs. It is probable the Morgiana having one more mast than the Dotterel occasioned this panic, as the American sloops of war of the heaviest class have hitherto shown a preference to our *brig-rigged* sloops. The Dotterel is said to have been on watching the two schooners Caroline and Nonsuch,

of 16 and 12 guns, and 120 men each, and who were perhaps better informed of the condition of the Dotterel's crew, and therefore chose to remain blockaded. One of the instances above alluded to occurred in the Frolic (now Florida) of 22 guns and 171 men, avoiding the track of the Herald of 28 guns, (32 and 18 lb. carronades and long sixes) and 135 men, stationed off Baliga, on learning that the latter's main deck battery were carronades and not long sixes, as at first supposed. The Herald throws only twenty-eight pounds more shot than the Frolick, and is not so large by 150 tons.

"On the 12th July, 1814, the Syren of 16 guns, two 42 pounders and twelve 24lb. carronades and two long 9's, with 137 men, was captured by the Medway 74. It is conjectured that the 42 pounders were taken from the President frigate, which was in port refitting when the Syren sailed: leaving the former fourteen instead of sixteen 42 pounders on her quarter-deck. The three American 44's were built in 1798; and the United States had become so weak in her upper works that commodore Decatur, in his letter to sir Thomas Hardy off New-London, states her to mount but 49 guns, when we know she carried 56, besides howitzers in her tops, at the capture of the Macedonian. These apparently trivial circumstances are noticed, because should any of these frigates hereafter undergo an inspection by foreigners of any nation, the Americans will not scruple to say, "You see the ship does not mount so many guns as the British gave her." It is in such sophistry as this, and not in fighting, that we are unequal to the Americans.

"I am not aware of having to notice the capture of any other man of war by a national vessel of the Americans. Two we have lately lost to American *privateers*. One of them under such circumstances of bold daring on the part of her commander and crew, that it would be highly unfair to pass it over.*

"The Landrail cutter of four 12 pound carronades, commanded by lieutenant Lancaster, with a compliment of only 19 men and boys, fell in with, on the 12th July, the large American privateer schooner Syren; carrying, according to the American account, two 12 pound carronades, four long 6's, one long 12 pounder on a traversing carriage, and 78 men; with this unequal adversary the cutter sustained a running fight of one hour and 20 minutes: and a close action of within half pistol shot of 40 minutes more, when boarding gave her to the enemy. Nor were her exertions wholly in vain; for she killed the privateer's captain and one or two of his officers, wounded eight men, and had but one wounded herself. The cutter has since been re-captured by the Wasp sloop of war; but her gallant captain and crew are prisoners in America.

"The crews of the American privateers are generally obtained in the same way (with the exception of pressing) as those of our

* The other was the Ballahon schooner, of four guns and thirteen men, prize to the Perry privateer, of five guns and one hundred and twenty men.

ships of war: and therefore a stated number of such men from each nation combatting together would afford a much fairer specimen of the gallantry of their respective countries, than opposing the "choice and pick" of one side against the "ordinary riffraff" of the other. Have not instances then daily occurred of our little packets with thirty or forty men and boys beating off the largest American privateers with crews of a *hundred* men and upwards?

"One of the late numbers of the Naval Chronicle contains copies of a correspondence between sir Thomas Hardy, commodore of the British squadron off New-London, and the commander of the American squadron in port, blockaded by them; which, without a little explanation, may give rise to very erroneous ideas of American gallantry.

"From the vicinity of the two squadrons, and the constant intercourse with the shore by means of licensed vessels, the American commodore was fully apprised that the *Endymion*, besides her great inferiority in metal, was many men short of her compliment: and that that compliment, when full, scarcely exceeded half the crew of the United States; which had been greatly increased since the capture of the *Macedonian*. His assertion of having reduced the number of his guns was a manœuvre worthy of Americans. The fact is, the United States is very much hogged; which induced the commodore to take off five or six of her bow guns, and no doubt for that reason only, to substitute eight long 32 pounders for the same number of her midship main-deck 24's, which were shifted into the *Macedonian*; thus making both ships heavier than they were before, instead of lighter, as is apparent from the commodore's very *candid* letter of challenge. His "incautious" consent, as expressed in his second letter, to allow the *Endymion* and *Statira*'s crews to be made up from the *Ramillies* and *Borer*, was not mentioned in his first letter; therefore must afterwards been verbally given when the commodore found he had gone too far to retreat.

"How very anxious both captains Hope and Stackpole were that this meeting should take place, is notorious to all on the American station. Captain Decatur declined a meeting between the *Statira* and *Macedonian* singly: evidently afraid of the same disappointment recurring that ensued from that of the *Shannon* and *Chesapeake*.

"No sooner did the correspondence terminate than the American papers teemed with paragraphs, reflecting upon the courage of the British commanders: and of course extolling to the skies that of captains Decatur and Jones, and their officers and men. This it was that occasioned a British subject to get copies of the letters, and to publish them in a Boston paper. So unexpected an event astounded the blustering miscreants, and they were afterwards content with whispering what they dared not again proclaim.

“A very popular writer among the Americans gravely passes the following exordium upon the character of his country's seamen:—“In all the qualities essential to success on the ocean, the American seamen are not only equal, but superior to the British seamen. It is no merit of their's. Nature and circumstances have made them so. But so it is—they are *physically* superior—they are *morally* superior. The warm and variable climate of the United States has, to a certain degree, melted the original English constitution of our ancestors, till, instead of the broad-shouldered and ruddy form of the people of Great Britain, the Americans are a thinner race of men, with less personal strength and stamina, but with more quickness, more alertness.”

“Is the above hodge-podge of character the best dish this political purveyor can serve up? I have neither room nor leisure now to pass an opinion upon its merits; having only faithfully handed down the receipe, that others may profit by it.

“Within these few months the Americans have published a work entitled, “The Naval History of the United States.” The book is intended to exalt the naval character of the Americans at the expense of our well tried seamen. *They* have never beat *us*; but we were fully equal to them. We have never beat *them*; but they were greatly inferior to us! The *British NAVAL CHRONICLE* is of a far different stamp; and will be read with interest all over Europe when that book will be thrown aside with disgust: as its glaring falsehoods and new fangled phraseology shall outrage the feelings, or puzzle the understanding.

“I cannot dismiss the book, however, without exposing one or two attempts to aggrandize the exploits of the American public and private armed vessels. One of the numbers of the *British Chronicle* records the loss of some men on board the *Yarmouth 64*, in consequence of the sudden blowing up of the American ship *Randolph*, that by accident got within reach of her guns. A day or two after the event two men were picked up on a piece of the wreck, and preserved by the *Yarmouth's* people. These fellows, upon reaching home, mentioned the loss of men, &c. on board the *64*; and perhaps added a few embellishments of their own. Be that as it may, the story was already in good hands: a splendid oil painting was prepared to perpetuate the daring attack made by the gallant captain Biddle in his little *32* gun frigate upon a *British 64*—the latter's spars are seen tumbling about her decks, her sails pierced with shot holes, and she evidently had the worst of the action—and doubtless would have struck but for the unfortunate blowing up of her antagonist: the description in print *out-Americans* this, and to be duly appreciated, must be read at length. I wish I could give it, but cannot. Again—that a privateer of *8* or *10* guns and *120* or *140* men should capture a merchantman of *10*, *12*, or *14* guns, and at most perhaps *16* men, can create no surprise. But “the American privateer schooner ———

of 8 guns *only*, commanded by — Thunderbolt, esquire,* has actually captured the fine British ship ———, mounting 14 guns" (intended to be considered as fully manned of course) is an event calculated to impress the reader with ideas not very flattering to the character of British seamen: at the same time to establish beyond a doubt the "unrivalled gallantry" of their too cunning opponents:—especially when half a dozen captures of this kind appear to have been made in one cruise!

"Notwithstanding all this hectoring on the part of the Americans, British tars are still ready, and even anxious, to meet them on any thing like equal terms. Such a meeting cannot well happen, as they go to sea in vessels with which we have none of a similar *rate* able to contend. Thus the capture of the *Reindeer* by the *Peacock* will be proclaimed and rewarded† as a victory over an equal force; and had the latter been taken by one of our 28 gun frigates, it would have been "an American *sloop of war* has, after a very severe action, been taken by a British *frigate*."

"On the 24th of August a handfull of British troops entered the city of Washington, and compelled the enemy to destroy, besides naval and ordnance stores to a considerable amount, the timber for a 74; a frigate ready to lanch, intended to carry 60 guns, (besides top guns) named the *Essex*, and a sloop of war, the *Argus*, (two) of 22 guns ready for sea.

"On the first of the next month the American ship *Wasp*, of 22 guns and 180 men, a second time came across one of our gun brigs, the *Avon*, of 16 32lb. carronades and 2 long 6's and 118 men. It was a night action, and had been fought nearly two hours when the *Castillian* brig came up. The *Wasp* made "three sail" of the *Castillian*, and ran off while the latter was taking out the *Avon's* surviving crew from the sinking vessel.

Superiority on the American side.

In weight of metal, as nine to seven.

In number of men, as three to two.

In size of vessel, as seventeen to twelve.

"The *Wasp* left L'Orient five days previous to the action, thoroughly refitted; and having refused men that offered to enter, had no doubt a larger crew than when she engaged the *Reindeer*. That action is a good comment on this.—The *Reindeer*, with only 24 pounders, killed and wounded twenty-six of the enemy: whereas he acknowledges but two killed, and one slightly wounded by the *Avon*; and that only three of her shot pierced his bulwarks.

* A requisite addition to the name of the captain of an American privateer.

† Where a committee, appointed by government, decree a captured vessel of war to have been of equal force to her opponent, the whole value of the prize goes to the captors. Captain Decatur, under this new prize-act, received the full value of the *Macedonian*!—Our late brig, the *Epervier*, was brought in by the American government, the other day, of fifty-five thousand dollars. The whole of this goes to the officers and crew of the *Peacock*—because it was a battle between ships of "equal force!"—What fellows these yankees are!

Much credit is due to the officers and crew of the *Avon* for their perseverance in this unequal conflict; but the action cannot surely be ranked (as it was by some of our public journalists) "among the most brilliant achievements recorded in the naval annals of this eventful war." Miserable gunnery on our side was evident enough, which may perhaps be partly attributable to a difference of opinion about the manner of loading a carronade to produce the best effect; but above all, to not drilling the men at firing the guns—a practice the Americans never neglect, as we have *felt* too often.

"Early in September the *Adams*, captain Morris, was burnt by her commander at Hampden, Penobscot, to prevent her falling into our hands. Of her battery mounted on the shore we got possession. The *Adams* was a very deceiving ship, being a frigate cut down; and measured about 780 tons: she carried 24 18lb. long guns (or columbiads) and 2 long 12's, with a compliment of 248 men—principally masters and mates of merchantmen. She was an incomparable sailer, and might have done a deal of mischief to our commerce with impunity, had she avoided entering the Penobscot.

"The next was an action in which British valour shone with unrivalled lustre, but was prematurely overcome; yet not till after an arduous and sanguinary struggle of some hours. Against nearly a two-fold superiority did the tars of old England yield the day. It was fought on Lake Champlain within the enemy's territory, 11th September, 1814, a year and a day after that of Lake Erie. Captain Pring's official letter, as well as sir James L. Yeo's introductory one, will be read with a lively interest by every friend of the navy.

"It is a pity the statement of the comparative force of the two fleets referred to by the former was not transmitted, as at present we have only the American accounts to resort to.

"The *Confiance*, our largest vessel, was on the stocks sixteen days before the action; and of course quite in a rough and unfinished state. The locks for her guns had been sent from Halifax in a frigate, but did not arrive in time. The enemy, on the other hand, had been many weeks in, and was in all respects fitted for battle. He was in his own waters—we three thousand miles from home. The relative consequences of that was, as may be supposed, very important. Captain Pring tells us the *Confiance* went into action "with an unorganized crew, composed of several drafts of men who had recently arrived from different ships at Quebec: many of whom only joined the day before, and were totally unknown either to the officers or each other. Here must have been confusion upon going into action! The enemy was moored in line in his own harbour, abreast of his encampment. We advanced with baffling winds. The gallant captain Downie fell almost the first shot. The *Finch* struck on a rock about the middle of the action. The *Chub* drifted into the enemy's line; and the gun-boats

“abandoned the object assigned them.” Here was a chapter of disasters! The *Confiance* and *Linnet* had now the whole combat to themselves. Their crews fought like tigers. In vain they bled at every pore:—The day was not a day of *miracles*!

“Our vessels engaged were—ship *Confiance*, brig *Linnet*, and sloops *Finch* and *Chub*. The enemy’s were—the ship *Saratoga*, brig *Eagle*, schooner *Ticonderoga*, sloop *Preble*, and ten large gun-boats—five on each flank. The force of these, gleaned from the American accounts, comprises as follows:

BRITISH.		AMERICAN.	
4 32lb. carronades,	128lbs.	6 42lb. carronades,	252lbs.
6 24lb. do.	144	29 32lb. do.	928
16 12lb. do	192	7 18lb. do.	126
27 24lb.* long guns,	648	8 24lb. long guns,	192
16 12lb. do.	192	12 18lb. do.	216
4 6lb. do.	24	8 12lb. do.	96
	<hr/>	6 24lb. do. }	all on pivots 294
	1328	6 18lb. do. }	
	<hr/>	2 12 29 do. }	
Broadside,	676		<hr/> 2104
	<hr/>		
		Broadside,	1224

* Believed only to be CONGREVES.

“With this vast disparity of force, nearly two to one, the vessels were all the while closely engaged; so that the enemy’s heavy carronades, in which he exceeded us nearly NINE to ONE, must have produced a most awful effect. Even had our gun-boats been in the action, the disparity would have scarce been perceptibly lessened. What we *should* have done had we possessed only a slight inferiority, and had had the use of gun locks, is incontestably proved, by the number of killed and wounded. The enemy acknowledges to have lost 120; which captain Pring says “amounted to something more than our own.” The Americans, with all their exaggeration, stated our loss at 194; which, with half the usual allowance in such cases, would reduce it to less than theirs.

“As to the comparative amount of the hostile crews we have only analogy to govern us. Allowing our ships their full complement according to their classes; and that the enemy (as told us by himself some days before the action) had “abundance of seamen,” we may safely conclude they exceeded us in men in the same proportion as they did in weight of metal. *After* the action they stated their number of men at 820. But be it known the Americans exclude their marines from the “stated complements” of their ships of war. There is a marine barrack near Washington, whence men (chiefly sharp-shooters,) are sent to their ships. The marine officer of the *Saratoga* wrote his government a separate account of the exploits of his men;—a thing unusual in our service.

“In aggregate size of vessel, also, they nearly doubled us. The *Saratoga* is at least two hundred more tons than the *Confiance*;

and our brig and two sloops would scarcely equal, in measurement, their schooner *Ticonderoga*—to say nothing of their heavy brig, sloop, and ten gun-boats.

“After all this a question naturally arises—how came the lamented captain Downie to seek the action, especially with an enemy (otherwise doubly superior) moored in his own bay? We are officially told he was “hurried into action, in consequence of the earnest solicitation of his excellency sir George Prevost!”

“The Americans, as is common with them, boasted much of their gallantry on this occasion: actually pretending to wonder that commodore M'Donough should have succeeded against “such fearful odds.” One says, we have taken four of their *largest ships*. The commodore himself begins quite *à la NELSON*: “The Almighty has pleased to grant us a signal victory on Lake Champlain in the capture of one frigate, one brig, and two sloops of war.” *A frigate!* but above all, “two *sloops of war*”—vessels not so big as Margate hoys. Here is a medley of *sanctity and falsehood!*

“We afterwards lost a sloop of war, the *Hermes*, blown up off Mobile; and destroyed near New Orleans the United States schooner *Caroline*, of 16 guns, which ended the events of 1814. The first month of the present year has already been propitious, and I anticipate in my next a far pleasanter task than the one I have just toiled through.

Yours,

BOXER.

“*Halifax, March, 1815.*”

Conclusion of the Remarks on “the Synopsis of Naval Actions, fought between the British and American ships of war,” in the British Naval Chronicle.”

WE have before had occasion slightly to notice the frequent and ridiculous attempts of a certain class of writers in England, to revenge the losses and defeats of the nation, by villifying the characters of those who inflicted them. Paltry as is this mode of vengeance, and unbecoming of a great nation, at least of a *rich* nation, it is now the common practice of that country, and the man who injures England, even in the common and authorised modes of warfare, is certain to have his actions, motives, character, and morals assailed in the most malignant and dastardly manner. His captures on the high seas, made under the authority of a commission from his government—are called *piracies*—and if in the spirit of gallant and fearless adventure, he visits the remotest regions

of the enemy's trade with the vengeance of his country, he is stigmatized as a buccaneer. Did this practice answer any other purpose, than merely to display the writhings of an enemy under severe and unexpected chastisement, it might perhaps be retrieved from contempt on the ground of its furthering some object of state policy, by making John Bull believe that all the enemies of England, were, like Napoleon, types of some of those enormous monsters foretold in the revelations: but arrogant, ignorant, and stultified as are the majority of the people of that country of which we are now speaking, we believe very few Englishmen if any of them, are sufficiently ignorant to believe that taking whalemén in the south seas and destroying them, under the sanctions we have recited is an act of piracy, or that visiting a groupe of islands discovered by the buccaneers, absolutely enrolls a man in that honorable fraternity. All these attempts to take away the character of an enemy, are therefore worse than useless, since they only serve as indications of bitter mortification, and exhibit nothing but proofs of that sore and querulous feeling which, for want of courage, or force to revenge itself, resorts to the pitiful resource of scandal and calumny.

We have been led into these observations, by the manner in which captain Porter is mentioned in the first part of the preceding article. For some reason or other, this gentleman has the *honour* to monopolize a large portion of the ill-will of those writers, who are on all occasions the most virulent in their abuse of America, from Mr. Gifford of the Quarterly Review, down to the "British naval officer." This distinction in our minds so peculiarly honorable to any American whatever, we think can be traced to the following causes. He inflicted a severe wound on the vain glorious presumption of Great Britain, by showing that notwithstanding "Britannia rules the waves," and not a sail spreads but by her permission, an American frigate under his command actually remained more than a year in the tracks of an important branch of the trade of England, which she cut up completely. For this he is not to be forgiven. Contrary to every honourable principle of warfare—in defiance of an express understanding, while disabled in his ship, and claiming the sacred right of a neutral port—he was attacked and taken by two British ships, and, in his official letter, spoke of such a violation of honour and national

rights, in terms of reprobation suited to his feelings, and to the circumstances which excited them: and for this he is not to be forgiven. On his return home, under the sanction of a parole given him by captain Hillyer, he was stopped off Sandy Hook by a British ship of war, contrary to the rules of war, and ordered to lay too all night, under her guns. Justified by this violation of his parole on the part of the enemy, he made his escape to shore in a boat, leaving this severe, and in this instance just reprimand with the officer who boarded his vessel—"that he now found British officers, not only regardless of their own honour, but the honour of each other." Can we wonder after this, that he should be singled out as a mark for the only weapons in which England has ever been able to revenge herself against America—the weapons of calumny and abuse!

We shall trouble ourselves very little with the statement, or table of weights and measures exhibited on occasion of the action between the Essex and the British vessels, or with his pretty boast that "he could wish for the sake of captain Hillyer, the Cherub had been absent." It is plain that the captain himself did not sympathise in this wish, since it was in his power to have sent her away at any time, and in fact the proposal was made to him more than once by captain Porter. To save time, and if the truth must be told, to relieve ourselves from the burden of refuting misrepresentations so often repeated, that the labour is intolerable, and the sameness actually stupifying—we will also pass over the statement of the action between the Wasp and Reindeer. Whatever may have been the difference of their force, the acknowledgment of the writer, in his notice of the subsequent affair between the former vessel and the Avon, is sufficient for our purpose. It is the peculiar misfortune of this most unfortunate writer, that he wishes to unite in his own person, the character of a monitor, as well as an apologist, to the British navy. Thus in the midst of his excuses, he mingles certain sly monitions, that unluckily entirely demolish the aforesaid palliations. Notwithstanding his tables and calculations, he is forced in his capacity of monitor to knock himself in his other character of apologist, completely on the head, by telling the British officers that after all it is their own fault, in not exercising their men properly, that they have been

so often defeated. See, gentle reader, what the poor creature says. "*Miserable gunnery on our side was evident enough*" which above all was owing to not drilling the men at firing the guns, a practice the Americans never neglect, as we have felt too often." In another place he says the American seamen are all "picked men," and the British all "riff-raff." Surely after such acknowledgments, the writer might have kept clear of the foolish inconsistency of denying our superiority!

Those who believe in the story of the Dotterel, are beyond the reach of such weak logicians as we are. They must believe the American officers and seamen are paltrons. They belong to the class of people, whose appetites and digestion are increased to an unnatural degree by disuse, or some peculiarity of physical organization, so that whether it is iron hoops, or boiled rice, which is presented to them, it is immaterial—down it goes. If the Americans are cowards, what must the English be, who have so often of late been beaten by them? Of all things in the world a judicious defender of national character, will avoid underrating the valour of an enemy, who has beaten his friend; since it is plain that the lower he sinks the former, the more he debases the latter, who do what he will, must always be undermost. It is even bad policy in the victor to speak slightly of the valour and conduct of the vanquished, because it detracts from his own merit, and this is one special reason, why we have refrained from saying more of the English sailor than was absolutely necessary to establish our superiority. It would have suited our purpose much better, to have praised them for courage, skill, activity, and generosity, and nothing but a scrupulous regard to the truth restrained us from indulging our wishes in this respect.

Pursuing the example of the puppet-showman, mentioned in a former part of this examination, the "British officer" occasionally ekes out his melancholy exhibition, with "*An alligator nine feet long.*" Thus he mentions the capture of the Syren of sixteen guns, by the Medway of seventy-four, and the burning of the Adams, and an unfinished vessel at Washington, both by ourselves, as proofs of British superiority. Nothing can afford a better proof of the grade of feeling, as well as of intellect occupied by this writer than these citations. They have nothing to do

with the question, and the British writer who alludes to the capture of Washington, by calling to mind the destruction of public edifices devoted to civil objects, and of public libraries sacred to purposes of useful knowledge, ought to be punished for a libel against his countrymen, most especially in a country where *truth* is deemed to be libellous on the authority of a chief justice of England.

But it would seem that the capture of a sixteen gun brig by a seventy-four, is introduced with the double purpose of a set-off against the Reindeer and Avon affairs, as well as an attempt to injure the honour of commodore Decatur. It seems the Syren had on board two 42 pounders, conjectured to have been part of the armament of the President, seven of whose guns had been left on shore by commodore Decatur, who considered that ship too weak for her guns. This circumstance the writer insinuates was intended to be made use of by the Americans, in case of the capture of the President, in order to diminish her rate, and impose upon foreign nations. We doubt whether it is fair for a man to look into his own mind, or the practice of his own countrymen, for motives of conduct which would be dishonourable in others. When the President sailed on her last cruise, having undergone repairs, the guns were replaced, and this circumstance is alone sufficient to refute the uncandid insinuation of the British officer. She was then, as before, commanded by commodore Decatur, and the same motives which are ascribed to him in the first instance, would have operated in the second. It is known that the President was captured by the Endymion, and what is very extraordinary, struck to her after her fire was silenced, and she was out of gun-shot! But what is still more extraordinary, the Pomone and Tenedos shared in the prize-money* for the capture of the American ship, though taken by the Endymion alone, as the king's printer in Bermuda said, and unsaid, and

* Notice is hereby given to the officers and companies of his majesty's ships Endymion, Pomone and Tenedos, captains Hope, Parker and Lumley, commanders, who were actually on board at the capture of the American frigate President, on the fifteenth of January, 1815, that they will be paid their respective proportions of the net proceeds of head-money for the said capture, on the tenth of May. And all shares not then claimed, will be recalled

said again, until he was at last brought to a perseverance in the first falsehood, by a sound cudgelling given him by an American midshipman. But the wonder of all wonders is, that commodore Decatur was treated with great civility by his captors, who took from him nothing but his library, a decided proof of that love of literature, for which Englishmen are so distinguished. For the particulars of the challenge passed between the ships at New London, and a like number of the blockading squadron, we refer the reader to the letters published at the time, as the British officer says, so unexpectedly through the intervention of a British subject in Boston, as to astound "THE BLUSTERING MISCREANTS," meaning the Americans, gentle reader.

Justice to the memory of a gallant officer, whose melancholy fate has called forth the regrets of this whole nation, induces us to make a few remarks on the time given to the action between the Wasp and Avon, by this astonishing writer. From the quotations taken from the English journalists, who, it seems, class this action as one of the "most brilliant achievements recorded in the naval annals of this eventful war," it would seem that because the Wasp sheered off after having so disabled the enemy that she sunk, a few minutes after, that she was beaten. It is true the Avon kept the field, as a dead man keeps it, because he can't run away; while the Wasp made sail on the appearance of the Castillian, and as is stated, two other sail. The engagement happened at night: it had lasted two hours, according to the British officer, if the Avon had not struck she must have been still firing. The Wasp could not tell at night how much she

at No. 23 Strand, every Tuesday and Friday, for three months from the first day of payment.

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Sixth class,	-	-	-	0	19	33	.4
Seventh class,	-	-	-	0	12	10	
Eighth class,	-	-	-	0	6	5	

WILLIAM MARSH, for

JOHN DOUGAN, Agent

was disabled, and consequently on the appearance of the Castilian, did not know but that she would have two ships instead of one to fight. Whether there were three sail or one, therefore, in sight, is a matter of little or no moment, since a proper regard to his duty would have obliged the commander of a ship to do precisely what captain Blakeley did. Hardly had the Castilian time to take her men out when the Avon sunk; while the Wasp continued her cruise, and was floating long afterwards gallantly on the waves. Yet it would appear that some of the British journalists make this out a most brilliant victory on the part of England. Even the modesty of the "British officer on the American station," shrinks from this assumption, and though he admits the defence to have been persevering, with most unparalleled candour he denies the victory. We would give him credit for this, did we not know that one of the arts of an uncandid writer is to gain credit for continued misrepresentation, by the occasional admission of a self-evident fact. The simple reader takes this for a proof of fairness, whereas it is only one of the vulgar refinements of English literature.

The last action noticed by the "British officer," who, heaven be praised, has at last brought his Synopsis to a close, is that on Lake Champlain, in which he affirms that "*British valour shone with unrivalled lustre*," the plain English of which is, that British valour shines much brighter when defeated after a tolerable resistance, by the Americans, than when it conquers Spaniards, Dutch, Danes, Frenchmen, and such like people. This is one of the highest compliments ever paid our brave countrymen, and whether intended or not, we will accept of it as one of those *by blow* truths that sometimes drop from a man before he is aware of the necessity of disguise.

This action the writer truly states happened "a year and a day after that on lake Erie," equally fatal to the enemy; equally destructive of his hopes of successful invasion, and equally demonstrative of superiority on the part of the Americans. It was fought on the eleventh of September; that of Perry, on the tenth; and we are credibly informed, that ever since these defeats, the fashionable month for hanging in England, has been September. Formerly, November was the season in which the people of that

country took great delight in hanging or drowning themselves in Rosamond's-pond, or the Serpentine. It was in the ominous month of November that the famous popish plot (every thing bad was popish in those days) was to have been consummated by the blowing up of the parliament-house, king, lords and commons and all, by that terrible incendiary and powder-monkey, Guy Faux. In commemoration of this lucky escape, on the night of the fourth of this month, the bellman goes through the streets of London alarming the good citizens with this tremendous distich:

“ This is the night—I speak it with great sorrow,
That we were all t’ have been blown up to-morrow,”

than which there is scarcely any two lines in the whole compass of English poetry more awfully and obscurely sublime. But ever since the actions of the tenth and eleventh of September, the gunpowder-plot has ceased to be kept as an anniversary, and more Englishmen hang themselves in that month, “wilfully,” as the grave-digger says, than in all the rest of the year, especially about the tenth and eleventh.

In extenuation of this most signal defeat on lake Champlain, where “British valour shone with unrivalled lustre,” the writer states the following facts, whether true or false, we will not take upon us to say. In the first place he affirms, that the *Confiance*, the principal vessel of the British squadron, was on the stocks sixteen days before the action. Suppose she was; is that any reason why she could not have been in a proper state for action? There are instances in our naval history of vessels of war, larger than the *Confiance*, being built, lunched, and fitted for sea in little more than a month, and we should despise ourselves if this circumstance were ever urged in extenuation of any disasters that might befall them. In the second place, “*the locks for her guns had been sent from Halifax in a frigate, but did not arrive in time;*” whence we are left to infer that the guns were fired without locks. In the third place, “*He (the Americans) was in his own waters, we (the British) three thousand miles from home;*” whence we are to infer that the British, like true dunghill cocks, are supposed to fight the better, for being the nearer home. In the fourth place, “*the Confiance went into action with an unorganized*

crew, composed of several drafts of men, who had recently arrived from Quebec, many of whom only joined the day before, and were totally unknown to the officers and each other." It may be remarked that this was precisely the case with the Chesapeake, the capture of which vessel is considered by this writer as decisive of British naval superiority! The officers and crew were strangers to each other. Again, the "*the enemy was moored in line, in his own harbour, abreast of his encampment.*" Captain Downie was killed in the beginning of the action; the Finch struck on a rock; the Chub drifted into the American line, and the gunboats did not do their duty! What a terrible chapter of accidents! and certainly amply sufficient to account for the result. It reminds us of the excuses of an honest fellow for being beaten in a boxing-match, at a country fair in England: he did not deny being soundly drubbed, but insisted that if he had not had one eye closed by a blow in the beginning of the battle, and been knocked down three times to his adversary's once, he would certainly have beaten him. "But after all, said he, I displayed the true British valour, and fought like a tiger."

Fearful, however; that all these excuses will not be altogether satisfactory, the "British officer" proceeds to state the relative force of the two squadrons, which he professes to take from "the American accounts," not having that transmitted by captain Pring, which we dare say the admiralty kept safe enough. We do not like to call names, but will not hesitate to say, that the account given by the officer, as taken from the American statement, is an impudent forgery; that it never appeared in any American paper, except perhaps in one of those devoted to the cause of England, of which we have more than one in this country, and that the whole statement given with such appearance of arithmetical accuracy, is wilfully false. Instead of the weight of metal fired at a broadside by the American squadron, being as he states, very nearly double that of the British, it is demonstrated by official returns, that the difference was only thirty-seven pounds, a disparity so very immaterial, that any other writer would have been ashamed to adopt it as an excuse for his defeat. By the documents lodged in the navy department, the American squadron carried 2023 pounds weight of metal, and the British 1950. The Ame-

ricans had certainly the best opportunity of ascertaining this matter, as both squadrons were in their possession after the battle.

Arguing from probabilities, the writer goes on to suppose, that the Americans *must* have had at least as great a superiority of men as of guns. We might safely let such probabilities as these alone, as it is useless to reason against mere assumptions, had we not official authorities to prove that the superiority, at least in the number of men, was on the side of the British. The returns of commodore Macdonough state his whole force at 820 men; the British lost, as appears from the same authority, in killed and wounded, 194, and their whole number of men amounted to 1050. Can it for a moment be supposed that sir George Prevost would have ordered captain Downie to attack an American squadron of double his force; or that the captain would have come down on our line in the manner he did, except from a consciousness of superiority. This consciousness could only have arisen from a superiority in numbers of men and weight of metal; for by this time the British were tolerably well cured of all ideas of any other superiority over the Americans, by land or sea.

Fatigued with the examination and exposure of an endless succession of misrepresentations, tedious from their sameness, and disgusting from their effrontery, we shall abstain from any notice of the sneers thrown out against the reputation of our country, and commodore Macdonough, on the score of veracity. We have before examined the probabilities which respectively sustain the clashing statements of either party with reference to most of the actions that occurred during the late war; and will now merely observe, that nothing in the character of the writer of the Synopsis, in his mode of reasoning or writing, or his statement of facts, is, we think, calculated to support either the reputation of the British navy, or the veracity of its officers. He writes, we perceive, under the signature of "Boxer," whence it seems probable that he is one of the officers taken in the Boxer sloop of war; who after having received the hospitalities, for which a certain portion of the United States is so very distinguished, particularly with regard to British officers, in time of war, returned to his country, and displayed his gratitude by puny attempts to injure the reputation of this country.

We will close this subject with a few general remarks suggested by the performance we have carelessly reviewed in the preceding numbers of the Chronicle. The writer lays infinite stress on the difference of force in vessels of the two nations *rating* the same; and if he had established his assertions on these points, they would have been of considerable weight in this question. Certain it is, that much of the reputation of the British navy is founded on its superiority in this very respect; to wit, in her vessels of similar rates with those of France, of late her only rival, among the European powers. The following is the armament of the French frigate L'Astrea, of forty guns, built in 1792, taken from an official return of her commander, to the minister of marine, merely as a matter of form, and not with any view of extenuating any defeat; no motive could therefore exist for deviating from the truth.

28 twelve pounders,	- - -	336 lbs.
6 eight do.	- - -	48
4 thirty-six pound carronades,	-	144
Total,		<hr/> 528 <hr/>

Here follow the particulars of the armament of a British thirty-eight gun frigate, also taken from an official paper.

28 eighteen pounders,	- - -	504 lbs.
20 thirty-two pound carronades,	-	640
1 twelve, long gun,	- - -	12
Total of an English 38,	-	<hr/> 1156 <hr/>
Do. of a French 40,	- -	528
Difference,		<hr/> 628 <hr/>

Thus it appears that the difference in weight of metal between a French forty gun ship, and an English thirty-eight, is considerably more than one half in favour of the latter. And yet while England values herself upon victories over such vessels, her writers deny us credit for beating them, under pretence of a doubtful superiority of five or six guns, and some dozen or two of men! Prudence should dictate to them a little more liberality to others,

if they expect their own claims to pass without being severely questioned.

The next, and the last characteristic we shall remark upon in this publication, is the spirit of bitter and splenetic antipathy it breathes in almost every page. We do not mean an honest, open, manly host-neering, vulgar, whiffling sort of hatred that vents its de-blows, and insinuations. On this subject we might reasonably expect some little irritation on the part of a British writer: The beaten party has always a right to make the best of his disasters; but still the victor is entitled at least to justice. We are therefore not surprised at the tone and character of this weak and miserable performance, when we see, in almost every English publication where the subject can be foisted into view, the same vulgar slang of abuse poured out upon this country. From the high throned critic, to the lowest Grub-street "British officer on the American station," all seem to be administering to the national and vulgar antipathies of John Bull, by pouring a stream of obloquy on the American character. Is it to be supposed, that Americans who all read, and feel most deeply associated in their country's honour, will not pay them in some way or other, and roll this torrent back upon its authors? However despicable these attempts may be, they will sink deep into the heart of America, who will never believe in any professions of friendship from the British government, so long as writers, notoriously under its patronage, pursue this system of irritating warfare. This country will be forever disposed to war with England in revenge for her abuse, and the irritation created by these mischievous writers, will one day be assuaged by torrents of blood. Think they that their sneers at our army and navy did not string their nerves, and make their hearts burn to wipe away these imputations, and revenge themselves upon the nation who sanctioned them? Hath not an American eyes, organs, dimensions, feelings? If you insult him, will he not feel; and if you injure him, will he not revenge? England will in vain attempt to keep down the ever-growing energies, the wakened spirit, the springing intellect of this country; she will do nothing after all but keep alive a spirit, that at some future period will 'ride like Death on his pale horse, over the bodies of millions of victims to national antipathies,' ex-

if they expect their own claims to pass without being severely questioned.

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Gilbrede sc.

LIEUT JOHN T SHUBRICK

Late of the United States Navy

eited not more by injuries, than by insulting irony and affected contempt. She will make an everlasting enemy, where kindness and consideration might have made an everlasting friend.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF LIEUTENANT JOHN TEMPLAR
SHUBRICK.

THE genius, and the spirit of republicanism, is closely allied with a disposition to do honour to merit without regard to the circumstance of rank. In hereditary governments, hereditary distinctions are often sufficient to claim the notice of the biographer; and on the death of a prince, however insignificant the part he acted while living, or however destitute his character may have been of every claim to the notice of his contemporaries or the remembrance of posterity, it is still considered a respect due to his rank, to give a sketch of his life, and if there was nothing in it to merit the attention of mankind, to supply the deficiency, by dwelling on the exploits of his remote ancestors. This disposition to commemorate the existence of men who, in their individual characters, have little claim to the notice of the world, merely on the score of the accidental circumstances of rank and station, is generally combined with an indifference to the claims of real worth; and hence it often happens, that the commanders of armies and fleets, whatever may be their merit, receive all the credit of success, while the secondary agents are left to the chance of the good report of the chief, for their reward. There is neither justice nor policy in this; for justice requires that honour should be paid where honour is due; and policy, that every stimulative should be given to the exercise of human powers, in every situation where they are to be excited honourably and advantageously. The person who ostensibly directs any affair whatever, is sufficiently aware that if honour results from its successful issue, the principal share will fall to his lot, unless he is notoriously deficient in the performance of his part. *He*, therefore, wants no additional motive to exertion. But it is otherwise with men in stations less conspicuous, who are often entirely overlooked, and sometimes

stripped of their due, to embellish the fame of others. This neglect or injustice deprives men of one of the best and most honourable motives, that render exertion voluntary, and not the mere effect of subordination. The most ordinary soldier, is more or less open to the reception of this feeling; and however it may be the fashion in other countries to debase the human species even below the brutes, by calling them *machines*, we, of this nation, have had ample proof of the superiority of men, who, to the habits of discipline in war, added, not only an enthusiasm in favour of the cause they espoused, but were impelled to activity by a conviction that their individual exertions, would gain them individual distinction. Men, from the mere effect of coercive discipline, may be brought to fight well with their hands, but they will never be a match for those who fight *heart and hand*.

Few of the celebrated conquerors of ancient or modern times, and especially of those who raised themselves from a private station to the command of armies, and the rule of empires, overlooked this certain method of animating and attaching the hearts of their followers. A compliment paid in the presence of the army; an ornamented shield, a musket of honour, or some other trifling badge, to distinguish a man from his comrades, was sufficient to excite the keenest emulation, and to animate every man with an ambition almost equivalent to that of the chief himself, whose prize was perhaps an empire. Soldiers who merely fight for pay and plunder, are degraded to the lowest state of mankind; for nothing but the hope of distinction, or the love of country, can render the trade of war more honourable than that of the assassin, who murders at a stated price.

Both our opinions and feelings are therefore in favour of administering all the aid in our power to the reputation of deserving men, and especially those who have passed the best years of their existence in serving their country in a profession, which every day might call for the sacrifice of their lives. This duty can always be performed, without rendering the subjects ridiculous by exaggerating their merits, or cheapening their rewards by rendering them too common. By abstaining from inflated eulogy or superlative praise; by preserving a due consistency between the language and the subject; and carefully avoiding that profusion

of ornament, which renders the finest figure ridiculous, a modest and decent memorial may be raised which will be dear to the hearts of friends, without exciting the ridicule of the indifferent, or deterring the stranger from stopping to ask to whose memory the simple structure is consecrated. With these remarks which are intended as a reply to certain gentlemen who think that untitled merit has no claim to the notice of our readers, we will proceed with the little sketch of the most material incidents in the life of an officer, whose death would always have been a subject of regret, even though it had not happened under such melancholy circumstances.

JOHN TEMPLAR SHUBRICK was born on the eleventh of September, 1788, at the seat of his father, colonel Thomas Shubrick, in South Carolina. He was educated partly at various grammar-schools in Charleston; was some time at the college, then under the direction of the reverend Mr. Woodbridge, from whence he went to a private seminary at Dedham, in the state of Massachusetts, where he remained nearly three years. On his return to South Carolina, he was placed in the office of William Drayton, esquire, a distinguished scholar and lawyer, since a colonel in the United States army, as a student at law. Discouraged by looking forward through the long interval that must elapse before he could possibly commence the practice of the law, and perhaps inspired by those suggestions which so often indicate to the youthful mind the path most likely to lead to distinction, he determined to relinquish his legal studies.

Accordingly, after very mature deliberation, he applied to his father, who, coinciding with his wishes, made application in 1806, to the secretary of the navy, who promptly forwarded warrants for John, as well as his brother, William Branford Shubrick, now a lieutenant in the service; and who had also solicited permission of his father to enter the navy. This prompt attention of government to the wishes of colonel Shubrick, was due to his revolutionary services.. He had been an active and distinguished officer during the great struggle in which this country burst her chains, after sweating blood for seven long years, and was among those to whom congress voted their thanks, and a medal, expressive of their high approbation. The claims of such

men we hope will always be attended to when they are offered; for if there be any persons now living in this country, peculiarly entitled to our gratitude, it is those who stood by her in her most severe and sanguinary struggle, nor laid down their arms, or remitted their exertions, till they saw she had weathered the storm. The sons of colonel Shubrick did not degenerate; for during the last war, all of them, to the number of six, were in arms, and they were all brave.

The subject of this sketch, though his honourable career was so early, and so unfortunately closed, perhaps saw more service, and was in a greater number of engagements, than any other officer of his age in the service. He early received a lesson of the necessity of always being prepared for action, in the affair of the Chesapeake, which sunk deep into the hearts of our naval officers, and which, however dishonourable to the national character, gave a lesson of infinite value, and roused a spirit which in the late war was fatal to England. He was in the Constitution in the action with the Guerriere, and on her returning to port for repairs, joined the Hornet, and was present in the affair with the Peacock. He was selected by captain Lawrence to take possession of the Peacock, but she sunk before it could be done.

When the Hornet joined the President and Macedonian, he served as first lieutenant of the Hornet, under captain Biddle. From thence he passed into the President as second lieutenant. In the action which took place between the President and a British squadron, lieutenant Shubrick is spoken of in commodore Decatur's official letter, as having behaved with distinguished gallantry. The peace with England, which occurred shortly after, offered him an opportunity to return to the bosom of home, and to enjoy the society of the lady whom he had recently married in New-York. But the war which was almost immediately afterwards declared against the regency of Algiers, again called him into action under his old commander, Decatur, as first lieutenant of the Guerriere, the flag-ship of the squadron. In this ship he was present in all those affairs which led to the submission of Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli, and the consequent revival of peace. On the consummation of these events, lieutenant Shubrick was despatched to the United States in the Epervier sloop of war, to bear the tidings

that the barbarian was humbled, and the captives set free. But the ill-fated vessel never reached her destination. Every body recollects the terrible storms which about the period of her expected arrival, swept our coast from south to north, and destroyed many a good vessel. In one of these, in all human probability, the *Epervier* foundered, and every soul perished. We cannot contemplate this doleful calamity, without sensations of the most melancholy cast. We every day see ample proofs of the inevitable destiny of man; and every day hear of numbers going down to the tomb in the common course of nature. But there is a character of deep and awful grandeur, as well as of affecting pathos, in the bitter uncertainty which envelops the fate of so many human beings. We know that they are dead, and that is all we know.

Peace to their manes—and may the recollection of Mr. Shubrick's merit remain as a consolation to his surviving family. Among his associates he stood an example of steadiness, attention to his duty, and courage in battle; and by his country he is honoured in his memory by having his name associated with those, who served her well, when her rights were at stake. At this period, when the violence of kindred sorrow has subsided into a calm and sacred feeling of resignation, such considerations may be urged without violating the sanctity of a broken heart on the one hand, or opening wounds already closed, on the other.

MILTON'S DESCRIPTION OF A KING.

A king is a person, who for any thing wherein the public really needs him, has little else to do but to bestow the eating and drinking of excessive dainties: to set a pompous face upon the superficial actings of state; to pageant himself up and down in progress among the perpetual bowings and cringings of an abject people, on either side deifying and adoring him for nothing done that can deserve it.

SELECT REVIEW.

General review of lord Byron's poems.

[From the British Review.]

The following pages are introductory to a critique on 'The Siege of Corinth and Parisina' We extract them because they are written with force and spirit, and in order that our readers may be acquainted with the various opinions of the literary world concerning the works of this celebrated poet.

WE are not so little conversant with the human character, and especially with the habits of authors, as to trust to their promises of silence. We know that in general when a disputant says he will not say one word more, he means that he is fully determined to have the last word, and we do not give a poet credit for greater moderation. In our criticisms, therefore, on lord Byron's *Corsair*, in the dedication of which he announced his intention to forbear trespassing, as he modestly expresses himself, upon the public patience for some time, though we thanked him in the name of common sense, good poetry, and sound morality for the promised forbearance, we were not such simpletons as to expect that, as long as there was left remaining in story a vagabond ruffian, and a black-eyed maid to be celebrated; as long as any men, women, or children could be found to endure the repetition of the same gaudy confusion, and distorted sentiment in broken verse, the same combinations of blood and debauchery, the poet would cease to take advantage of the infatuation. We did hope, however, that lord Byron had determined to lay *down* his pen for a season, in order to lay *up* a little more of that abundance which great nature, and the greater scene of moral existence, are always spreading before the contemplative mind; and to learn, by a better acquaintance with the higher forms of poetry, what are its noblest ends, and what is the authentic stamp of its value. When the little poem that succeeded to the *Corsair* made its appearance with all the old characteristics about it, as like to the former productions as a one pound bank-note is to another one pound bank-note, and with as little difference in value, we were still not in despair; because we con-

sidered that his lordship's muse had been too long under the influence of her Turkish habits, at once to renounce the harem, and that some fruit of her former connexions was yet to be got rid of before the ancient ties could be completely dissolved. But alas! after allowing the full time for the consequences of former bad habits to pass away, we are mortified to find this self-same muse of lord Byron again a delinquent, and performing her vows of chastity and seclusion by bringing twins into the world; the Siege of Corinth, and Parisina! hopeful pair! happy mixture of Turkish and Italian breed! possessing that genuine cast of physiognomy which in one expression combines valour and apostacy, slaughter and sentiment, felony and feeling, profaneness and tenderness, incestuous love and melting sorrow.

The two poems which are now presented to the public under the sanction of lord Byron's reputation exhibit all the faults which have characterized his lordship's preceding effusions, without the admixture of any of their merits, for merits undoubtedly some of them have displayed, especially that poem which appears to have been sacrificed to new friendships with some of those who were the objects of its spirited and just satire; we mean the address to the "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers." To the "Childe Harold" we have also tendered our humble tribute of applause: but from that poem (in which, though there was little to elevate, there was much to delight) the poet has tumbled down through several successive stages of deterioration, with an incredible "*vivacite de pesanteur*," to the lowest profundity of the bathos; at the very bottom of which he now lies together with his wretched Parisina. To the same limbo of inanity we would gladly consign all those unholy images of slaughter, sensuality, incest, and infidelity, which have taken such poetical possession of lord Byron's brain.

The hero of lord Byron's poems, who is always a man that has defrauded the gallows, whether he be a Giaour, a Corsair, or a Renegado, is scarcely diversified by the different degrees of iniquity by which he is characterised. What was said by Martin Clifford ill-naturedly enough to Dryden, might, with a change of the names, be properly addressed to lord Byron:—"I am strangely mistaken, if I have not seen this very Almansor of yours in some disguise about this town, and passing under another name. Pr'ythee, tell me true, was not this Huffcap once the Indian emperor, and at another time did he not call himself Maximin?" &c. It might with greater propriety be inquired of lord Byron, whether all his heroes

were not one and the same rogue with an *alias* only to distinguish him, and whether the Venetian renegado at the siege of Corinth has any thing to give him a distinct personality, unless it be his bare arm in battle, and his spinning, quivering, shivering, departure out of life: for the poet has represented him as making his exit in a sort of pirouette. Sallies of frantic depravity; combinations of confused magnificence; half-told and half-smothered motives to revenge; half-sensual and half-sentimental passion; dark or dark blue scenery; a horrific group of dogs, and carrion, and jackalls, and wolves, and Tartars' and Turcomans' heads and bones; to which may be added all that the very significant line prefixed to the work by way of motto announces,

“ Guns, trumpets, blunderbusses, drums, and thunder”—

these, and more of a similar kind, are mingled in the first of the poems, now before us, in so ludicrous an assemblage, as to make us doubt whether it was not the design of this young nobleman to laugh at the simplicity of his admirers, and to try how much of this stuff the stupid infatuation of the public would endure. The vehicle of this tasteless accumulation is a lax and lawless versification, which seems to propose to itself something of lyric irregularity, in the simple neglect of metrical consonance and methodical structure.

To enter into a detailed criticism upon such a work would, we feel, be mightily ridiculous; especially as we are by no means sure that the poet is not trying a ludicrous experiment upon the tolerance of fashionable favouritism: for after all we cannot without a struggle surrender that impression in favour of the author's genius, which, with some intermixture of disgust, the Childe Harold created in our minds. We must own that while we dwelt with great and glowing satisfaction on the many passages of poetical sentiment and imagery with which the poem last alluded to abounds, we regarded the character of the Childe himself with great suspicion; but we certainly did not see in it the embryo of that delusive compound of a man, who, by an unnatural mixture of heroism and crime, brutality and sentiment, was afterwards to warp the principles of the young into an admiration, and perhaps imitation, of a very pernicious model.

What increased our suspicion that there was some danger to public sentiment lurking in this new poetical character, which would in some other forms further develop its malignity, was the very obtrusive manner in which it was brought forward in a picturesque poem, whose object was to describe

in rich and vivid colours the interesting scenes of Turkish Greece, with those mixed sentiments of admiration and regret, which the awful traces of pristine splendour in the bosom of that fair region were calculated to produce. Through these magnificent scenes the poem has dragged along a refining, repining, blasphemous sensualist, sulky at any turn that brought new beauties to his eye, and in the midst of external glory and grandeur, fretting about himself and his disappointments, and haunted by the ghosts of his departed pleasures.

But although we were sorry that lord Byron had picked up this fellow, to set him in the heart of ancient Greece, instead of leaving him to do his duty on the Thames; yet, as he bore so unmeaning a part in the scene, we cannot say that he prevented us from enjoying the brilliant stanzas with which the poem of *Childe Harold* is interspersed; but when we find him, strutting in his cap and feather, the hero of every subsequent poem from the same hand, we must confess that we totally lose our temper, and feel the most pleasing part of the performance to be that in which the grim-featured sentimentalist surrenders his existence to one of those guns or blunderbusses which lord Byron enumerates in the very well-chosen motto of his present poem, as the instruments which he has always at hand to bring about his bloody catastrophes.

As the *Childe* possessed nothing of the poet's melancholy, nothing of that musing sadness which sometimes belongs to a rich imagination combined with a soft and tender disposition, so neither has the *Giaour*, or the *Corsair*, or *Selim*, or *Alp*, any of those properties which entitle them to the true and natural sympathies of the reader; none of those delights which, "dolphin-like, showed their backs above the element they lived in." They are a very narrow-minded gentry, without any sentiments that carry them out of the selfish circle of animal pleasure, but covering all their brutal habits with the expiatory quality of desperate devotion to some pretty woman. We cannot, however, say so much for *Alp*, the hero of the poem now in our hands, who having suffered some outrageous indignity or some state persecution at Venice, his native city, enters a renegado into the service of the Moslems, and undertakes the siege of Corinth, of which he anticipates the total destruction, and where he knows the object of his love, together with her aged father, must necessarily be liable to perish in the general carnage, in order to be revenged upon his own country. And even when, on the night before the siege, the ghost of the gentle lady visited her lover in his sad vigil under

the walls of the city, and threatened him with the loss of heaven and herself, he remained true to his turban and his Turkish creed, thus giving an oblique preference to the paradise of Mahomet and the celestial houris.

It must be owned, however, in behalf of this poem that it is meritoriously short, and that the story does not require that painful investigation, and, oh terrible thought! a second perusal, to understand its plot and catastrophe. And as we have formerly, in our review of the *Corsair*, observed upon the uncertain and mysterious end of that hero's existence, his lordship has amply provided against the recurrence of such doubts in his reader's mind by shooting his renegado dead, and then blowing him up with gun-powder. We have here therefore a complete certificate of his hero's death; and one might have hoped that after such a doubly sure disposition of our old enemy, we should never have had to encounter him again: but alas! he does appear again, and is beheaded in another poem in the same volume. After the discipline which he had undergone in the siege of Corinth, however he certainly does not appear in the same blustering and outrageous character in which he had before presented himself,

“ His face
Deep scars of thunder had entrench'd, and care
Sat on his faded cheek.”

In a word, he is more moderate and decent; he contents himself with simply defiling his father's bed, for which he peaceably submits to a public-execution. And thus the Childe, whom we have identified through all his felonious disguises, is brought to his appropriate end, and poetical justice is satisfied.

But *we* are not so well satisfied; and we will tell our readers why:—because we have sons and daughters: but this is but a partial reason; let us add—because Britannia has sons and daughters, and in the duration of their characteristic virtue and modesty we behold the best pledge of the continuance of our happiness and greatness. We do not say that lord Byron *means* to interrupt this happiness or greatness, but we think that the false associations, the loose morality, and the atheistical character of his productions, dressed up in poetry not generally good, but often fascinating to female and youthful fancies, is doing a species of mischief which, if he could once be brought to view it in its real extent, he would probably regret and be anxious to remedy. We love the public mind, and feel tremblingly alive to its best interests.

We love our country's freedom, and feel satisfied that purity of morals, and the sacred influence of our blessed religion, constitute its only true basis. We wish ardently, therefore, that we could prevail upon the noble poet whose works we are now considering to put in execution the promised retirement of his muse, and do justice to those powers which nature has bestowed upon him, by giving them their ample range over the wide circuit of contemplation that lies before him, selecting those objects which are worthy of his intellect, and connected with his own and his country's glory—which may lead him through nature to nature's God, and qualify him to open what in the language of the author of the *Night Thoughts* is called "the volume of the skies."

"Open thy bosom, set thy wishes wide,
And let in manhood; let in happiness;
Admit the boundless theatre of thought
From nothing up to God."

If lord Byron could be persuaded to expand his capabilities, and raise his poetical thoughts to their proper standard, he might soon perhaps be able to afford to abandon to their due condemnation all those miserable compositions which have flowed from his pen since the appearance of the *Childe Harold*, and give us a hero instead of a malefactor.

Le Rodeur Français, ou les mœurs du jour. Orne de deux Gravures.

The motto to this work is from Duclos:—

"Je me suis propose, en considerant les mœurs, de demeler dans la conduite des hommes quels en sont les principes."

[From the Critical Review.]

THIS work, entitled the *French Rambler*, in allusion to Dr. Johnson's *Rambler*, is a series of papers published at Brussels, of which the greater part appeared in the *Quotidienne*, and the remainder in the *Journal General de France*. The author had immediately in view as his model *L'Hermite de la chaussee d'Autin*, which has been considered a happy imitation of our celebrated *English Spectator*, with the merits of which the public is fully acquainted.

MISCELLANEOUS SELECTIONS.

[From the Champion.]

THE PILGRIMAGE OF LIVING POETS TO THE STREAM OF CASTALY.

"Who now shall give unto me words and sound
Equal unto this haughty enterprize?"

SPENSER, B. 2. c. 10.

I AM one of those unfortunate youths to whom the muse has glanced a sparkling of her light,—one of those who pant for distinction, but have not within them that immortal power which alone can command it. There are many,—some, sir, may be known to you,—who feel keenly and earnestly the eloquence of heart and mind in others, but who cannot, from some inability or unobtrusiveness, clearly express their own thoughts and feelings: whose lives are but long and silent dreams of romantic pleasure and poetic wonderment;—who almost adore the matchless fancies of genuine bards,—and love them as interpreters and guardians of those visionary delights which are the perpetual inmates of their bosoms. I love the poets: I live in the light of their fancies. It is my best delight to wander forth on summer evenings, when the air is fresh and clear,—and the leaves of the trees are making music with it,—and the birds are busy with their wings, fluttering themselves to rest,—and a brook is murmuring along almost inaudibly, and the sun is going quietly down:—it is at this time delicious to muse over the works of our best bards. Some time last year, I had roamed in an evening like to one of those I have spoken of; and, after dwelling on the fairy beauties of Spenser, and from thence passing to the poets of my own time, and comparing the latter with some that had gone before, I cast myself on a romantic bank by a brook side. The silence around me,—save the home-returning bee with its "drowsy hum,"—and the moaning sound of distant cattle,—and the low, sullen gurgling of waters—lulled me into a sleep. The light of my thoughts gilded my dream;—my vision was a proof of mental existence when the bodily sense had passed away.

Methought—(this, I believe, is the established language of dreams)—methought I was walking idly along a romantic vale, which was surrounded with majestic and rugged mountains;—a small stream struggled through it, and its waves seemed the brightest chrystal I had ever witnessed. I sat me down on its margin, which was rocky and beautiful—(so far my vision was copied directly from life).—As I mused, a female figure rose like a sil-

very mist from the waters, and advanced, with a countenance full of light, and a form of living air:—her garments floated round her like waves, and her hair basked on her shoulders—

“like sunny beams on alabaster rocks.”

There was a touch of immortality in her eyes,—and, indeed, her visage altogether was animated with a more than earthly glory. She approached me with smiles, and told me she was the guardian of the stream that flowed near,—and that the stream itself was the true *Castalian*, which so many “rave of, though they know it not.” I turned with fresh delight to gaze on the water; its music sounded heavenly to me,—I fancied that there was a pleasant *dactylic* motion in its waves. The Spirit said, that from the love I bore to her favourite, Spenser, she would permit me to see (myself unseen) the annual procession of living bards to fetch water from the stream on that day:—I looked her my thanks as well as I was able. She likewise informed me, that it was customary for each poet, as he received his portion, to say in what manner he intended to use it. The voice of the Spirit was such as fancy has heard in some wild and lovely spot among the hills or lakes of this world at twilight time:—I felt my soul full of music while listening to it, and held my breath in very excess of delight. Suddenly I heard the sound of approaching feet, and a confused mingling of voices;—the Spirit touched me into invisibility, and then softly faded into sunny air herself.

In a little time I saw a motly crowd advancing confusedly to the stream:—I soon perceived that they were each provided with vessels to bear away some portion of the immortal waters. They all paused at a little distance from the spot on which I was reclining; and then each walked singly and slowly from the throng and dipped his vessel in the blue wild wave of Castaly. I will endeavour to describe the manner and words of the most interesting of our living poets on this most interesting occasion. The air about the spot seemed brighter with their presence, and the waves danced along with a livelier delight:—Pegasus might be seen coursing the winds in wild rapture on one of the neighbouring mountains,—and sounds of glad and viewless wings were heard at intervals in the air, as if “troops of spirits were revelling over head and rejoicing at the scene.”

And first, methought, a lonely and melancholy figure slowly moved forth and silently filled a Grecian urn:—I knew by the look of nobility, and the hurried and turbulent plunge with which the vessel was dashed into the stream, that the owner was lord BYRON. He shed some tears while gazing on the water, and they seemed to make it purer and fairer:—he declared that he would keep the urn by him, untouched “for some years;”—but he had scarcely spoken, ere he had sprinkled forth some careless drops on the earth. He suddenly retreated.

There then advanced a polite personage very oddly clad;—he had a breast-plate on,—and over that a Scotch plaid—and, strange to say, with these,—silk stockings and dress shoes:—this gentleman brought an old helmet for his vessel;—I guessed him to be **WALTER SCOTT**. His helmet did not hold enough for a very deep draught, but the water it contained took a pleasant sparkle from the warlike metal which shone through its shallowness. He said he had disposed of his portion on advantageous terms.

Next came **THOMAS MOORE**. You might have known him by the wild lustre of his eye, and the fine freedom of his air; he gaily dipped a goblet in the tide, and vowed, in his high spirited manner, that he would turn his share to nectar:—he departed with smiles. I heard the wings play pleasantly in the air while *he* was bending over the stream.

I now perceived a person advance whom I knew to be **SOUTHEY**. His brow was bound by a wreath of faded laurel, which had every mark of town growth. He appeared quite bewildered, and scarcely could remember his way to the inspiring stream. His voice was chaunting the praises of kings and courts as he advanced—but he dropt some little poems behind him, as he passed me, which were very opposite in tone to what he himself uttered. He was compelled to stoop before he could reach the water,—and the gold vessel which he used, procured but little at last. He declared that his intention was to make sack of what he obtained. On retiring, he mounted a cream-coloured horse, which was in waiting,—and set off in uneven paces for St. James's.

Then appeared **ROGERS** with a glass in his hand, which, from the cypher engraved thereon, had evidently once belonged to Oliver Goldsmith. He caught but a few drops, and these he meant to make the most of, by mingling them with common water.

CRABBE, with a firm step and steady countenance, walked sedately to the stream, and plunged a wooden bowl into it:—he observed that he should make strong ale for the country people, of all that he took away;—and that, after the first *brewing*, he should charitably allow Mr. Fitzgerald to make small beer for his own use.

In a pensive attitude, **MONTGOMERY** sauntered to the water's brink;—he there mused awhile,—uttered a few somethings of half poetry and half prayer,—dipped a little mug of Sheffield ware in the wave, and retired in tears.

With a wild yet nervous step **CAMPBELL** came from the throng;—light visions started up in the fair distances as he moved, and the figure of *Hope* could be faintly discerned amidst them,—she smiled on him as he advanced. He dipped his bowl in the stream with a fine bold air, and expressed his intention of analysing part of the water which he procured.

Next came **HUNT**, with a rich fanciful goblet in his hand, finely enamelled with Italian landscapes; he held the cup to his breast as he approached, and his eyes sparkled with frank delight. After

catching a wave, in which a sun-beam seemed freshly melted, he intimated that he should water hearts-ease and many favourite flowers with it. The sky appeared of a deep blue as he was retiring.

LORD STRANGFORD would now have advanced but the voice of the Spirit forbid him,—as he did not come for the water on his own account.

COLERIDGE, LAMB, and LLOYD, walked forth arm-in-arm, and moved gently to the stream:—they conversed, as they passed, on the beauties of the country,—on its peaceful associations, and on the purity of domestic affections. Their conversation then turned to poetry,—and from the simplicity of the remarks of Lloyd and Lamb, I found that their very hearts were wedded to innocence and peace;—Coleridge talked in a higher strain,—but he at last confused himself with the abstruseness of his own observations:—he hinted at a metaphysical poem he was about to write in 100 books,—Lamb remarked to him that he should prefer one of his affectionate and feeling sonnets to all his wanderings of mind. Each of these poets held in his hand a simple porringer—declaring, that it brought the finest recollections of frugal fare and country quiet:—Lamb and Lloyd dipped in a bright but rather shallow part of the stream;—Coleridge went to the depths, where he might have caught the purest water, had he not unfortunately clouded it with the sand which he himself disturbed at bottom. Lamb and Lloyd stated that they should take their porringers home and share their contents with the amiable and simple hearts dwelling there;—Coleridge was not positive as to the use to which he should apply his portion of the stream, till he had ascertained what were the physical reasons for the sands' propensity to mount and curl itself in water: he thought, however, of clubbing it with the portions of his companions and making a lake of the whole.—These three poets left the stream in the same manner they approached it.

Last came a calm and majestic figure moving serenely towards the stream:—the Celandines and small flowers sprang up to catch the pressure of his feet,—the sun-light fell with a finer glow around,—spirits rustled most mirthfully and musically in the air, and a wing every now and then twinkled into sight,—(like the autumn leaf that trembles and flashes up to the sun)—and its feathers of wavy gold were almost too sparkling to be looked upon;—the waters of Castaly ran brighter as he approached, and seemed to play and dimple with pleasure at his presence. It was WORDSWORTH! In his hand he held a vase of pure crystal,—and, when he had reached the brink of the stream, the wave proudly swelled itself into his cup:—at this moment the sunny air above his brow, became embodied,—and the glowing and lightsome spirit shone into being, and dropt a garland on his forehead;—sounds ethereal swelled, and trembled, and revelled in the air,—and forms of light played in and out of sight,—and all around seemed like a living

world of breathing poetry. Wordsworth bent with reverence over the vase, and declared that the waters he had obtained should be the refreshment of his soul;—he then raised his countenance,—which had become illumined from the wave over which he had bowed,—and retired with a calm dignity.

The sounds of stirring wings now ceased,—the air became less bright,—and the flowers died away upon the banks. No other poet remained to obtain water from the Castalian stream,—but still it sparkled and played along, with a soul-like and melodious sound. On a sudden I heard a confusion of tongues behind me;—on turning round, I found that it arose from a mistaken set of gentlemen who were chattering and bustling and dipping at a little brook, which they deemed was the true Castalian;—their splashing and vociferation and bustle, can only be imagined by those who have seen a flock of geese wash themselves in a pond with gabbling importance. There was SPENSER, with a goblet, lent to him by a lady of quality,—and HAYLEY simpering, and bowing, and reaching with a tea-cup at the water,—and WILSON with a child's pap-spoon,—and BOWLES laboriously engaged in filling fourteen nutshells,—and LEWIS slowly and mysteriously plunging an old skull into the brook:—while poor COTTLE fumed and angered, but scarcely reached the stream at last. There were no encouraging signs in the elements,—no delightful sounds of attendant spirits,—no springing up of flowers to cheer these worthies in their pursuits:—they seemed perfectly satisfied with their own greatness, and were flattered into industry by their own vanity and loudness. After some time, the perpetual activity of tongues fatigued my ear, and I turned myself from the noisy crowd, towards the silent heavens;—There, to my astonished and delighted eyes, appeared SHAKESPEARE, surrounded with excessive light, with SPENSER on one hand, and MILTON on the other,—and with the best of our early bards thronging about him. One glance of his eye scared the silly multitude from the brook;—then, amidst unearthly music, he calmly ascended, and was lost in the splendours of the sky.—At this moment I awoke,—and musing on the wonders of my dream,—slowly bent my way homewards.

—
FROM MADAME DE STAEL.

Divine Wisdom intending to detain us some time on earth, has done well to cover with a veil the prospect of life to come, for if our sight could clearly distinguish the opposite bank, who would remain on this tempestuous coast?

POETRY.

LINES SUNG AT THE ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION OF MR.
FOX'S BIRTH-DAY IN SCOTLAND.

TUNE—"Scots wha ha'e wi' Wallace bled."

1.

Scots who fir'd by Freedom's flame,
Scots whom tyrants ne'er shall tame;
Celebrate the deathless name
So dear to Liberty!

2.

This natal day, this social hour,
The "joy of grief" shall grateful pour,
Of smiling tears, a sacred show'r,
T' embalm his memory.

3.

Who for Liberty and Peace,
With eloquence of ancient Greece,
Bade bigots howl—and war-
For ever blest be he.

4.

To him alone does Scotland owe
A jury*—rich oppression's foe,
Vile litigation's now laid low;
O let us grateful be.

5.

Shall Ireland still for England's law,
A sword, out-law'd, and thankless draw,
What Ireland suffers, Scotland saw
Before *her faith* was free.

6.

We sing the fight when Wallace led,
And boast the field th' invader fled,
T' our children point the warrior's bed
On gory Bannock-burn.

7.

But there is yet a nobler cause,
When Patriots strive for equal laws,
Our silent tears (our best applause)
We shed on Fox's urn.

* There was no trial by jury in *civil* cases, in Scotland, till Mr. Fox introduced this much desired reform in our courts.

[FROM MOORE'S SACRED SONGS.]

THIS world is all a fleeting show,
 For man's illusion given;
 The smiles of Joy, the tears of Wo
 Deceitful shine, deceitful flow—
 There's nothing true but Heaven!

And false the light on Glory's plume,
 As fading hues of Even;
 And Love and Hope, and Beauty's bloom,
 Are blossoms gathered for the tomb—
 There's nothing bright but Heaven!

Poor wanderers of a stormy day,
 From wave to wave we're driven,
 And Fancy's flash and Reason's ray
 Serve but to light the troubled way—
 There's nothing calm but Heaven!

[From the same.]

I.

On! Thou who dry'st the mourner's tear,
 How dark this world would be,
 If, when deceiv'd and wounded here,
 We could not turn to Thee.
 The friends, who in our sunshine live,
 When winter comes are flown;
 And he, who has but tears to give,
 Must weep those tears alone.
 But thou wilt heal that broken heart,
 Which, like the plants that throw
 Their fragrance from the wounded part,
 Breathes sweetness out of wo.

II.

When joy no longer soothes or cheers,
 And ev'n the Hope that threw
 A moment's sparkle o'er our tears,
 Is dimm'd and vanish'd too!
 Oh! who would bear Life's stormy doom,
 Did not thy Wing of Love
 Come, brightly wafting thro' the gloom
 Our Peace-branch from above?
 Then, Sorrow, touch'd by thee, grows bright
 With more than rapture's ray;
 As Darkness shows us worlds of light
 We never saw by day!

[From the same.]

I.

WEEP not for those, whom the veil of the tomb,
 In life's happy morning, hath hid from our eyes,
 Ere Sin threw a blight o'er the spirit's young bloom,
 Or Earth had profan'd what was born for the skies.

Death chill'd the fair fountain, ere sorrow had stain'd it,
 'Twas frozen in all the pure light of its course,
 And but sleeps, till the sunshine of Heav'n has unchain'd it
 To water that Eden, where first was its source!
 Weep not for those, whom the veil of the tomb
 In life's happy morning hath hid from our eyes,
 Ere Sin threw a blight o'er the spirit's young bloom,
 Or Earth had profan'd what was born for the skies.

II.

Mourn not for her, the young Bride of the Vale,
 Our gayest and loveliest, lost to us now;
 Ere life's early lustre had time to grow pale,
 And the garland of Love was yet fresh on her brow;
 Oh! then was her moment, dear Spirit, for flying
 From this gloomy world, while its gloom was unknown—
 And the wild hymns she warbled so sweetly, in dying,
 Were echoed in Heaven by lips like her own!
 Weep not for her—in her spring-time she flew
 To that land, where the wings of the soul are unfurl'd,
 And now, like a star beyond evening's cold dew,
 Looks radiantly down on the tears of this world.

—
 [From the same.]

Go, let me weep! there's bliss in tears,
 When he, who sheds the ~~tear~~ feels
 Some lingering stain of early ~~tear~~
 Effac'd by every drop that steals.
 The fruitless showers of worldly wo
 Fall dark to earth, and never rise;
 While tears, that from repentance flow,
 In bright exhalament reach the skies.

II.

Leave me to sigh o'er hours that flew
 More idly than the summer's wind,
 And, while they pass'd, a fragrance threw,
 But left no trace of sweets behind.—
 The warmest sigh, that pleasure heaves
 Is cold, is faint to those that swell
 The heart, where pure repentance grieves
 O'er hours of pleasure, lov'd too well!
 Leave me to sigh o'er days that flew
 More idly than the summer's wind,
 And, while they pass'd, a fragrance threw,
 But left no trace of sweets behind.

—
 [From the same.]

WERE not the sinful Mary's tears
 An offering worthy Heaven,
 When o'er the faults of former years
 She wept—and was forgiven?—
 When, bringing every balmy sweet
 Her day of luxury stor'd,
 She o'er her SAVIOUR's hallowed feet
 The precious perfume pour'd;—

And wip'd them with that golden hair,
Where once the diamond shone,
Though now those gems of Grief were there
Which shine for God alone!

Were not those sweets, so humbly shed—
That hair—those weeping eyes—
And the sunk heart, that inly bled—
Heav'n's noblest sacrifice?

Thou, that hast slept in error's sleep,
Oh! would'st thou wake in heaven,
Like Mary kneel, like Mary weep,
"Love much"—and be forgiven!

THE POETS.

BY LEIGH HUNT.

WERE I to name, out of the times gone by,
The poets dearest to me, I should say,
Pulci for spirits, and a fine, free way;
Chaucer for manners, and close, silent eye;
Milton for classic taste, and harp strung high;
Spencer for luxury, and sweet sylvan play;
Horace for elegance with, from day to day;
Shakspeare for all, but most, society.

But which take with me, could I take but one?
Shakspeare—as long as I was unoppress'd
With the world's weight, making sad thoughts intenser;
But did I wish, out of the common sun,
To lay a wounded heart in leafy rest,
And dream of things far off and healing—Spenser.

PETITION OF THE POETS TO THE BRITISH REGENT,

BY DR. WOLCOTT.

SINCE your highness makes knights
As plenteous as mites,
With neglect why so cruelly pass us?
Pray take the old sword,
By ambition ador'd,
And dub a few knights of Parnassus.

We, sir, reverence your name,
We add wings to your fame,
And thunder your deeds in full chorus;
Pray be quick as you can,
As JACK KETCH and his man
Are in hopes to be knighted before us.

* "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much."—St. LUKE,
vii. 47.

DOMESTIC LITERATURE AND SCIENCE.

ILDERIM: *A Syrian Tale. In four Cantos. 12mo. pp. 74. John Murray. London. 1816. Republished by Moses Thomas, Philadelphia.*

‘THIS poem (we are told in a brief advertisement) forms a part of a work, the plan of which was first conceived, and partly executed, in the countries which it attempts to describe; during the course of a journey, which was performed in the years 1810-11.’ We suppose these *four* cantos, like the *two* of lord Byron’s *Romance*, are ‘merely experimental;’ and we shall be somewhat mistaken if the result in this instance, as well as in the former, should not be flattering enough to provoke the remainder of the projected ‘work.’ The author has followed all the excellencies, while he has shunned all the defects, of his predecessor in the description of eastern scenery;—and, instead of filling up his pages with merely a succession of imagery, he has enlivened them with an interesting tale which forms by far the greatest portion of the work. When we speak of his *following* the excellencies of lord B. however, we must not be understood as intimating that he has absolutely attained them. We certainly think that some of his poetry is polished into more smoothness than that of his lordship; but neither in his language nor in his thoughts is he so rich or so copious as the author of *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*. Both have chosen the same stanza:—the poem of the latter contains about twice as many lines as that of the former; and we might observe that a work like *The Pilgrimage* ought to be twice as short, while one like *Ilderim* should be twice as long as it is. This difference does not result from any intrinsic superiority in the poetry of the latter,—but from the advantage of containing an eventful story which is calculated to keep the attention constantly awake. For a poem, indeed, which professes to describe the country in which its scene is laid, the adventures of the dramatis personæ of *Ilderim* compose too great a proportion of its stanzas.—We shall give the story as briefly as possible.

Balbec, a city at the base of Mount Lebanon, is the residence of Abdallagh,—who, to acquire his dominion, had murdered his emir (or prince) and, as he supposed, the whole male part of his family: nor had spared but one of the female, and that at the earnest solicitation of his daughter Azza. Elmyra, the rescued captive, was the niece of the murdered emir, and was tenderly beloved by his son. This son, left for dead by Abdallagh at the time of his usurpation, had been borne from the plain, cured of his wounds, and, changing his name from Caled to Ilderim, had been for two years, the leader of a band of robbers, who dwelt on Mount Libanus, and made nightly inroads upon the lands and the peace of the usurper. In one of these rencontres with Abdallagh’s guards, Il-

derim became separated from his band by pursuing too far a traitor who had led them into an ambuscade; and Mirza, his steady friend, conjecturing that, though absent, he might still be fighting in some part of the field, and hoping, by the sacrifice of his own life, to preserve that of his chief, assumed the name of Ilderim, and rushed impetuously upon Abdallagh; who firmly sustained the assault, foiled the assailant, took him prisoner; and having gained, as he thought, the whole object of the adventure, immediately called off his soldiers, and took his way homewards. Proclamation was made to the citizens of Balbec that next morning they should have a sight of that recreant Ilderim who had so long been the object of their terror:—but just as the hour of exhibition approached, the usurper received information of his daughter's captivity; whom Mirza, by means of a subterranean passage, had found means to apprehend and send away during the course of the preceding night. The sport was at an end; and all the troops were immediately in quest of Azza; when a peasant brought Abdallagh the intelligence that his daughter was a captive with Ilderim, and would be released only in exchange for Mirza. It was at this exchange that the two captives first had a sight of each other; and, as the poet would have it, the consequence was an immediate reciprocation of the tender passion.

That very night Ilderim assaulted Balbec for the last time. The gates were forced:—all was bustle, and noise, and confusion; Abdallagh is driven back; and just in the crisis of success Ilderim drops his disguise, cries out "Caled, the heir of the emir," and challenges the murderer of his sire to try their claims at the point of the sabre. Abdallagh turns: they meet; and a single stroke lays the usurper low. The citizens gladly hail their lawful ruler:—but Balbec was nothing without Elmyra; and, as Caled was assured that she had shared the fate of his other relations, he would gladly have accepted death from any hand which might be kind enough to give it. While he was retiring from the field, filled with such wishes, he was accosted by a wounded soldier, who told him that a little previous to the fight, Abdallagh had enclosed his daughter together with his whole harem in the tower, with orders to put them every one to the sword if the fortune of the night should go against him. Caled immediately collected his band; and, by means of Mirza's aforesaid subterranean way, arrived in the centre of the tower, just in time to beat off the murderers and save the shrieking females. It was not till the work was entirely completed that he caught the well-known voice and well-known countenance of his Elmyra. What become of Azza and Mirza, need not certainly be told.

We shall have room for but very few extracts. The initial stanzas of the three first cantos are extremely picturesque:

' The pale beam, stealing through the matted trees,
Kist Balbec's walls and stern Abdallagh's tower;

Cool through Abdallah's garden stream'd the breeze,
 Wak'ning each folded leaf and sleeping flower:
 Bright was the scene, and calm the soothing hour:
 Heav'n still its blessings shed on earth beneath,
 In silent dews that gemm'd the verdant bower;
 Earth pour'd her thanks in sweets from ev'ry wreath,
 Freshness was in the air, and life in every breath."

"The plain was lost in shade—a moment yet,
 Oh Libanus! on steepes of giant size,
 The sun delay'd—a moment, ere he set,
 Crimson'd the snow-clad heights, and ting'd the skies
 With streaks of roseate light and purple dyes,
 (Such tints as western eyes in vain desire,)
 Then plung'd and disappear'd—at once arise
 Heav'n's myriad lamps, and gem the vault with fire,
 So bright, that scarcely mourn'd the beams of day retire."

"Down Balbec's vale a train of horsemen ride,
 Amongst them one who seems on air to move:
 He darts along, excites his courser's pride,
 And eyes the groves around, the skies above,
 With rapture, such as souls enamour'd prove.
 'Tis the freed captive, snatch'd from dungeon gloom,
 Light, his enjoyment; liberty, his love;
 At once revers'd the terrors of his doom,
 For him each passing breeze from Eden seems to come."

Azza's relation of the circumstances attending her capture is beautifully given:

"From some deep dream of self-concenter'd thought,
 As the voice ended Azza seem'd to start;
 Then (inly pleas'd to hold discourse on aught,
 Save that the subject nearest to her heart:)
 'How little is't that Azza can impart!
 'Thou may'st remember when we parted last,
 'All reckless then of ambush'd force or art,
 'Parch'd by the heat that sultry summer cast,
 'I stood to catch the breeze, that fann'd me as it past.

"Long time I stood, regardless of the hour,
 'And trac'd the gaudy meteors as they flew,
 'And heard the crane's shrill clatter from the tower.
 'At length on yonder couch, that caught my view,
 'Rob'd as I was, my wearied limbs I threw.
 'Unknown to grief, and unsuspecting harms,
 'Full soon I drank the sweet oblivious dew:
 'A sudden motion gave my first alarms,
 'I wak'd—and wak'd within a man's—a robber's arms.

"I know no more—for, overcome with dread,
 'I swoon'd—and when again I liv'd to fear,
 'Without the walls I prest a grassy bed,
 'The robber watching o'er—with words of cheer
 'He tried to soothe—and from the fountain near

‘ Sprinkled my brow—then hastily unbound
 ‘ A ready courser from the fasten’d spear,
 ‘ And vaulted up, and rais’d me from the ground:
 ‘ The plain was overpast—the mountains clos’d around.’ ”

To the volume of Essays which, as we announced in our last number, Mr. Ogilvie is preparing for the press, he intends to add a second part; which will contain a narrative of the circumstances that led him to undertake the pursuit of public oratory, of the degree of success that has hitherto attended him in it, and of his plans with regard to its further prosecution;—together with the principal part of his oration entitled “*The Rostrum*,” select passages from other orations previously delivered by him, and a few pieces of philosophical criticism.

A new national work, entitled The Champions of Freedom, &c. &c. By Samuel Woodworth. *Copy-right secured according to law*:—a precaution which was quite superfluous; for that printer must be desperate indeed who should think of publishing a surreptitious edition of a work like that of which the author has given us specimens in his proposals. Our readers will only wish to hear the first clause of the first sentence: “In vain a leaden hail-storm beat upon the advancing phalanx,” &c.

“Now happy he whose cloak and cincture can
 Keep out this tempest:”

And if the whole book is of the same description, the only means of avoiding such a “leaden hail-storm,” is by advising the author to keep the remainder in its parent skull.

If our readers are not satiated with merely the above short extract, we are sure of giving them enough by the following paragraph:

“For a moment they paused on the steep brink of the deep-yawning trench that encircled the fortress. ‘Leap the ditch!’ exclaimed the intrepid leader of this undaunted column; ‘cut down the pickets! give no quarter! advance!’ Instant, on the word, they poured down the bank, like a mountain cataract, whose sounds are whispers to the clashing of their jostling arms. The ditch was filled, and a bristling row of iron pikes, fixed in the heads of the pickets, impaled several of the impetuous assailants. Again the voice of their leader urges them forward: ‘scale the pickets, and show no quarter! storm!’”

We cannot resist the temptation of applying to ourselves a sentence which almost immediately succeeds this belligerent paragraph:

“‘Quarter! Quarter!’ exclaimed the colonel, who had, a moment before, exhorted his men to give none; but he called too late.”

Wells and Lilly, of Boston, propose to publish by subscription, an elegant edition of the British Poets. The text collated with the best editions, by Thomas Park, Esq. F. S. A.

This edition is commonly known by the title of Sharpe’s British Poets; so denominated from the name of the publisher. By

omitting the works of several authors of the least general interest, Chaucer and Spenser, and also some of inferior merit, the publisher has been enabled to afford, at a moderate expense, the great mass of English poetry; including a great number of poems which have hitherto formed no part of a regular series.

The edition will consist of forty-four volumes; to which are added five, supplementary to the main work.

It will be printed in an elegant form, similar to the English copy, and upon paper of the best quality.

Each volume will contain from one to five engravings, amounting in all to one hundred and eleven; which the publishers engage to have executed by the first artists, and in the best manner.

The price to subscribers will be one dollar and twenty-five cents each volume, delivered in neat boards.

The first number of Mr. Elliott's work on the Botany of South Carolina and Georgia, (already announced in this Journal, vol. 7, page 189,) will be published in this present month, and the subsequent numbers at intervals of two months. Subscriptions for the work will be received by M. Thomas.

FOREIGN LITERATURE, SCIENCE, &c.

(From Recent British Publications.)

FRANCE. Five years since the Class of Sciences of the Royal Institute of France proposed as the subject of a double prize, *the theory of the planets whose eccentricity and inclination are too considerable to allow of the exact calculation of their distances by methods already known*. The class did not require any numerical application, but only analytical formulas, yet disposed in such a manner, that an intelligent calculator might be able to apply them with certainty either to the planet Pallas, or to any other hitherto discovered, or which may hereafter be discovered. Two memoirs only having been received, in which the authors have not sufficiently conformed to the intentions expressed by the class, it has prolonged the time for another year. The prize will therefore be adjudged in January 1817, and consist of a gold medal of the value of 6000 francs (250*l*.) Essays must be written in French or Latin, and none will be received after the 1st October next.

As nothing worthy of the annual prize founded to reward researches undertaken for the advancement of galvanism has been received, the class suggests the following points as still wanting to complete the theory of this important part of science. As it has been determined in a great number of cases what combinations result from the action of a calculable electricity, it would be important to determine, on the contrary, what measure of electricity results from the different combinations in which bodies pass to a

sensible and calculable electric state. A tolerably complete set of experiments undertaken with this view, would probably possess considerable interest and utility. Another phenomenon not less interesting, and which particularly concerns the animal economy, is that which manifests itself when alternate portions of nerves and muscles of the same animal, or of different animals, are capable of forming a circuit, the contacts of which produce the same excitations that result from a circle composed of metals, intermediate between the muscles and the nerves. This experiment might, perhaps, by its developments, tend to throw new light on the still obscure theory of the nervous influence on the organic actions, and on the result of these actions.

M. QUATREMERE DE QUINCY has just published a work in folio with fifty plates, mostly coloured, under the title of *The Olympian Jupiter, or the Art of Antique Sculpture considered in a new point of view*. It comprises an essay on the style of polychromian sculpture, an explanatory analysis of the toreatic, and the history of the statuary art in gold and ivory among the Greeks and Romans. The author has subjoined the restoration of the principal monuments of that art, and a practical demonstration or revival of its mechanical processes. In this performance he has found means to combine the solidity of science with the charms of ingenious hypothesis.

In the night of the 22d of January, M. PONS, assistant astronomer at the Observatory at Marseilles, discovered a comet in the northern part of the heavens, between the tail of the Little Bear and the head of the Cameleopard, at about 241 deg. of right ascension, and 86 deg. north declination. The fogs prevented this comet from being observed at Paris, till the 1st of February, on which day, at eight o'clock p. m. it had 59 deg. 57 min. of northern declination, and 341 deg. 25 min. of right ascension. This comet exhibits no trace either of tail or nucleus, and it is not discernible with the naked eye.

Abbate ANGELO MAJO, some of whose recent literary discoveries in the Ambrosian library at Milan we have already noticed, has just published a hitherto unedited work, for which the world is indebted to his researches, under the title of *Q. Aurelii Symmachi Octo Orationum ineditarum Partes* (90 pp. 8vo.) Symmachus, a celebrated Latin orator, flourished about the middle of the 4th century, and was admired by his contemporaries for his eloquence. He wrote and delivered a great number of orations, as we learn from the testimony of Socrates, the ecclesiastical historian, Cassiodorus, Photius, and Nicephorus, but especially from the collection of his own letters, the only performances of his that were yet known, as all his oratorical works were given up for lost. Fortunately, two copies of considerable fragments of eight of his

orations, have been preserved in a MS. in the Ambrosian library. They consist of four panegyrics, two addressed to the emperor Valentinian I, one to Gratian, and one to the Roman senate. The four others are to private persons, to the father of the orator, Trygetius, Synesius, and Severus. They bear the stamp of their age, and are full of fire, fancy, bold images, ingenious antitheses and sentences, and great erudition. The learned editor has annexed another fragment of an ancient orator, likewise discovered in a MS. of the same library, together with some variations to Pliny's panegyric from similar sources. He has also accompanied this first edition with an excellent introduction; critical and historical notes, and fac similes of the characters of the two MSS. in which these treasures have been so long concealed.

GERMANY. A new journal for astronomy and the sciences connected with it, began to be published with the present year, by Cotta of Stutgard. It will appear in monthly numbers of from two to six sheets, so as to form about 48 sheets annually. The names of the conductors and contributors afford the pledge of a work of sterling value. The editors are M. VON LINDENAU, director of the observatory of Seeberg, and professor BOHNENBERGER of Tübingen. They have secured the assistance of the most eminent German astronomers and mathematicians, as Beigel, Bessel, Brandes, Bürg, Buzengeiger, David, Ende, Gauss, Gerling, Harding, Heinrich, Horner, Ideler, Mollweide, Münchow, Nicolai, Olbers, Olthaus, Pasquich, Pfaff, Soldner, Triesnecker, Wachter, and Wurm; and baron Zach, who is in Italy, has promised the support of his contributions.

A friend on the Continent has transmitted to us a small tract in Latin, just published at Munich, by the chevalier DE LANG, lately keeper of the archives of the kingdom of Bavaria. Its contents, wholly extracted from the papers of the provincial superior of the Jesuits, recently discovered at Munich, exhibit a most frightful picture of the enormities committed in the latter half of the 17th century by the monks of that dangerous order, in the education of youth in Germany. "Never," says our correspondent, "was *tocsin* more seasonably sounded than in this tract, and all Europe must feel obligation and respect for the author, who, animated by the love of truth, and fearless of consequences, scrupled not to affix his name to the title. Whilst even in France disguised Jesuits are already again playing their atrocious game, and many, in other respects, worthy characters immediately about the person of Louis XVIII have expressed their opinion, that the neglected youth of France cannot be reclaimed except by the Jesuits; whilst even at Vienna itself, the superior authorities are consulted respecting the practicability of recalling the fraternity—this *Cave Canem* is no superfluous warning. Lang's tract ought to be cir-

culated in every country in Europe, and above all, to be laid upon the pillow of every sovereign."

The lectures held by Dr. Spurzheim in England have drawn considerable attention to the system of craniology founded by Dr. Gall. To such of our readers as are interested in this subject, the following notice, communicated by Dr. MARTINS of Munich, of a volume of imp. fol. just published there by Dr. SPIX will be acceptable. It is entitled: *Cephalogenesis, sive Capitis ossei Structura, Formatio et Significatio per omnes Animalium Classes, Familias, Genera et Ætates digesta, atque Tabulis illustrata, Legesque simul Psychologiæ, Cranioscopiæ ac Physiognomonix inde derivatæ*. The head is here considered in its evolutions throughout the whole series of animals, from man to the insects, at all periods of life, from the embryo to old age. Its relations to the other parts of the human body, and its functions as the principal organ of the soul, are illustrated in a new manner; and the work contains also a critical review of all that has appeared on the subject. Of the engravings nine are shaded, and nine in outline for demonstration. They are from drawings by the masterly pencil of Koeck, painter to the academy of Munich, celebrated for his admirable designs for the works of Sömmering, Wenzel, Fischer, &c. They exhibit exact representations of the skulls of animals of all classes, and afford an accurate medium of comparison, which discovers the laws followed by nature in the formation of the different varieties of the head. By the evidence of these laws the author has attempted to solve the wonderful problem involved in the structure, composition, and proportion, of that part of the animal frame. Psychology will thus obtain a true foundation in nature itself; cranioscopy and physiognomy will be reduced by some new measures to laws both simple and comprehensive; zoology will be enriched with views and principles of the greatest importance with respect to the classification of animals; and the whole of natural history will be improved by the discovery of an organic law, hitherto overlooked, which the author calls *Lex Circuitus Organorum*.

Dr. MARTINS farther informs us, that the king of Bavaria has it in contemplation, to send a scientific expedition into the interior of America.

DENMARK. The academy of arts and sciences in Denmark has, in consequence of an observation in a prize essay laid before it, appointed a committee to investigate the asserted efficacy of tannin as an antidote against all poisons, whether mineral or vegetable.

NORWAY. WALENBERG, in his *Journey through the Laplandic Alps* in 1807, observes, that the limits where the region of snow commences, are found to be gradually higher as you quit the north pole and travel towards the equator, whilst they rise to a still

greater and more sudden height on reaching the southern hemisphere.

POLITICAL ECONOMY.—*A Reply to Mr. Ricardo's Proposals for an economical and secure Currency.* By Thomas Smith.

MR. RICARDO'S pamphlet proposes three questions: the first asks, whether the bank shall be required to pay their notes in specie on the demand of the holders; and the other two regard the profits of that institution. This gentleman proposes to prevent the rise of paper above the value of bullion, that the bank should be obliged to give their paper in exchange for standard gold, at the rate of 3*l.* 17*s.* per ounce. Mr. Smith thinks that it would not be necessary to employ any force to oblige the bank to take gold at the price mentioned, and that the bank would be, in a very different sense, *obliged* to Mr. Ricardo to let them know where they could get it, and our author has no doubt that they would be ready to enter into a contract with him to give their notes in return for all he could furnish at that rate.

Mr. Smith considers that there are two principles which Mr. Ricardo would have been acquainted with if he had taken the trouble to read the existing pamphlets on the same subject: the first is; "that the price of bullion is entirely regulated by the issue of bank notes;"—the other, which Mr. Smith opposes, is, "that the precious metals are the standards of value and of currency." Lord Lauderdale insists that the term value, whatever might have been its original sense as it is used in common language, does not express a quality inherent in any commodity; and his lordship argues further, that *there is nothing which possesses a real intrinsic or invariable value*, and that the possession of no quality, however important, can confer value.

LEGISLATION.—*Idea of a new Law for the Civilized World, recommended to the consideration of France, Great Britain, and the American States.* By the author of a letter written from Athens, &c.

THE writer of this pamphlet considers that the question of war is a subject of too much importance to be entrusted to kings and ministers, and he proposes, that before any determination upon it be made, the opinion be collected of the community; assuming that the French cabinet were to decide on war, the following expedients he recommends should be adopted.

As soon as the ministers have decided on hostile measures, the minister of the interior will cause to be opened several great books: one set will be inscribed OUI, the other NON. Two of these, that is, one of each description, will be sent to the prefect of each department, to be laid open at his residence for the reception of signatures. The individuals signing must be possessed of certain descriptions of property to be explained.

Prefixed to each of the great books, is to be a statement of the causes for war. These books, at the close of three weeks, are to be transmitted to the legislature. If, on the scrutiny, the Ours predominate, war is to be declared; if otherwise, peace is to be preserved, and the ministry is to be dismissed.

The author then distinguishes the property authorising the parties to sign; the punishment for not signing being possessed of such property; the punishment for signing being unqualified; the fines for influencing parties signing; and those to be paid by any minister who shall issue any letter of marque, or sign or publish any war-manifesto, &c. unless war be sanctioned by the majority of signatures.

Other punishments are proposed against ministers of foreign affairs who suffer a year to elapse without making overtures of peace, and against ambassadors treasonably endeavouring to subvert the government of the state in which they reside.

EDUCATION.—*Jean et Jeannette, ou les petits aventuriers Parisiens.*

THE author of this production is one of the most interesting romance writers of France. His works are distinguished for natural grace, and for the animated scenes they present, adapted to the instruction of early life. This new effort is considered equal to any former one by the same writer, and for its spirit and originality to merit peculiar attention.

HISTORY.—*Histoire particuliere des provinces Beligiques, sous le gouvernement des Ducs et Comptes, pour servir de complement a l'histoire general: par M. Dewez.*

THE author of this work is tutor of what is called the Walloon division of public education in the department of the arts and sciences; he is also a member of the literary societies at Brussels, and that of emulation at Liege. This is the second volume of the work, and like the first, it shows extensive acquaintance with the history of Flanders, and a patriotic feeling highly meritorious. The third volume is expected to appear in the following month, with which the entire work will be completed.

Memoires Historiques sur les Revolutions d'Espagne: par M. de Pradt.

THE writer of these memoirs is no less a personage than the archbishop of Malines. He likewise wrote a work intituled "Le Congrès de Vienne," and several others. He has also figured away in the character of an ambassador. For what purpose of modesty it is we do not know, but the name and rank of the author are not introduced in the usual way, but are placed in a parenthesis in the title-page. Perhaps this may have been only an expedient of the bookseller, who considers the ecclesiastical dig-

nitary a little out of his proper situation in these memoirs. Under such circumstances, we perhaps might take the liberty to consider M. de Pradt merely as a man of letters, who condescends both to write books and to sell them. Gil Blas teaches us, that no oratorical display, no brilliancy of figure can soften the severity of criticism; and perhaps the French prelate, notwithstanding his liberal notions, deserves no more mercy than the Spanish bishop. However, passing over the phraseology of M. de Pradt, our limits will perhaps allow us to notice a little contradiction in an interesting part of the production. In page 222 is given the moral portrait of Napoleon, and from this view of him it might be concluded, that the only defect of Bonaparte was an extraordinary impulse of mind, which led him to incessant versatility. Seeing always new relations of things, and constantly generating new ideas (to use his own words) "il changeoit tant qu'il y trouvoit plaisir et avantage, et faisoit, pour satisfaire son penchant a la mobilité, ce qui portoit avec soi l'apparence de l'ambition ou de défaut de sincérité. Dans plusieurs cas on l'a cru perfide, il n'étoit que changeant."—On this principle, the deformity of vice exhibited at Bayonne is but a trifling change of temper, and with such an extraordinary spirit of charity, we might even pardon Mr. Pradt himself. When our bishop, accustomed to the pleasures of a court, and to the indulgence of wealth during his mission to Warsaw, contented himself with a mean apartment unsuited to his office and his duties, because it cost him nothing, he was thought to be avaricious, but it was merely this frivolous defect of versatility; when he violently declaimed against the journalists, after having employed them to publish articles most gratifying to his pride, it was thought he was insincere, but it was mere versatility. When he revealed the secrets of his old master, and threw the dirt of abuse at him, after worshipping him as a god, it was conjectured that he was ungrateful, but it was simple unconscious versatility.

The numerous accidents that occur by the clothes of females and children taking fire might be prevented, by the linen, of which their dresses are made, being passed through a solution of *alum*, which is an effectual security against their catching fire.

Several beautiful petrifications have been found at Wood-End, by Mr. Ryde of Awre. He has, also, from the wasting of the shore, occasioned by the subsiding of the Severn tides, discovered a petrified tooth of some enormous unknown animal.

The school of sacred music in Edinburgh, at this time reckons more than 250 pupils: they are taught upon the German plan, viz. by means of a large black board, on which the master writes his lessons with chalk.

Mr. J. A. Pope, translator of the *Ardai Viraf Nameth*, proposes to publish by subscription, the *Maritime Philology of Hindustan*, comprising a dictionary of all the sea terms used by the nations of Bengal, as well as those of Western India; with their derivations, and from whence adopted, with most of the proper names, in Arabic, Guzeratee, Concane, and in the common jargon of Hindustan, in Chinese, and many in Malbaree and Malays; with a dissertation on the present state of Arabian, Indian, Chinese, and Malay navigation; and notices respecting all the maritime tribes. The work will include, beside the sea terms and phrases, many geographical and commercial terms and descriptions. To which will be prefixed a dissertation on the poems sung and recited by all the maritime tribes of Arabia and India.

The readers of the *Asiatic Journal* cannot have failed to remark the literary activity which distinguishes all communications from Java. It would probably be derogating unjustly from the merits of the several members of the Literary and Scientific Society in that settlement, were we to forget any of them in our grateful acknowledgments for the industry which so manifestly prevails; but, at least till we are otherwise informed, we shall attribute a very large proportion of what we so much admire, to the excitement and example of its excellent president, governor Raffles. To the valuable account of a tour in Java, contained in the two preceding numbers of this journal, is added, in the present, a portion of a discourse delivered by the president on the 11th of September last, (see page 341.) The remainder will appear in the succeeding number. In that paper, the research, penetration, and grasp of mind of the president, have enabled him to present us with a hive of new and interesting materials. The theatre of his observations embraces the Eastern Islands, and extends to Japan. His philological remarks on the language of Celebes and Java are highly estimable, and important both to history and to the philosophy of the human mind. With respect to the Eastern Islands, he opens a new world of antiquities, of all the bearings of which he is not himself, perhaps, at present aware. Those who do not subscribe to all his conjectures, will yet thank him for all his information. The views and character of Japan, communicated on the authority of Dr. Ainslie, in this discourse, will be found gratifying, and, to most readers, unexpected in the extreme. The applause bestowed by the Japanese upon the work of Kœmpfer is a singular literary anecdote; and the fact, that the English language is studied by order of the emperor, and English books eagerly asked for in Japan, strongly marks the age in which we live, and the progress of human intercourse. "It is an extraordinary fact," says the president, "that notwithstanding the determination of the empire of Japan not to enter into foreign commerce, the English language, for seven years past, since the visit of captain Pellew,

has in obedience to an edict of the emperor, been cultivated with considerable success, by the younger members of the college of interpreters, who, indeed, on occasion of Dr. Ainslie's mission, were anxious in their inquiries after English books." Mr. Raffles says, a commerce between this country and Japan might easily be opened; and we find it rumoured that the court of directors of the East India company is far from differing greatly in opinion with this gentleman upon the subject.

To the ardent and indefatigable mind of Mr. Raffles, all external stimulus is perhaps superfluous; and still less can any increase of industry be expected from the humble tribute of applause which this journal is able to convey. Mr. Raffles is treading in a field of inquiry in which it seems probable that his name will never be forgotten. It is earnestly to be hoped that he has the means of procuring accurate drawings of the antiquities he describes.

Though it has been said above, that much of that literary lustre which has been mentioned as now spread over Java, is probably derived from the excitement and example of Mr. Raffles, it is also to be confessed, that the president appears to be not without worthy associates, in major Johnson, captain Baker, lieutenant Heyland, and Drs. Horsefield and Ainslie; and, on the whole, there seems good reason to lament, that if any copies of the transactions of the Literary and Scientific Society of Java have reached England, they have at least, been very few in number.

The twenty-fourth article of the Classical Journal contains, amid a variety of articles in classical, biblical, and oriental literature, an essay, the design of which is to trace the Abyssinians to a Hebrew origin, and a continuation of professor Scott's inquiry into the causes and diversity of the human character in various ages, nations, and individuals.

Governor Raffles is said to be engaged in a translation of one of the old Javanese poems described in his discourse.

The literary spirit in Java is not confined to the English inhabitants. "The angry discussions on Dutch colonial literature," says a Bombay paper of July last, "which have lately agitated the patriotic spirit of all genuine Hollanders have not yet subsided. The gazettes of every succeeding week are vehicles of long philippics; several of which contain a considerable share of point and humour, and must be exceedingly amusing to those acquainted with the subject under disquisition, and the individual combatants."

The excavations at Pompeii are prosecuted after a certain plan, so as to go round the whole town, which, when cleared from the

ashes which cover it, will probably become one day the most remarkable monument of antiquity.

Some men employed to sink a pit in Reading abbey, have found an ancient stone sarcophagus, which there is little doubt, from its being placed to the right of the altar in the church, formerly held the coffin of Henry the First, the founder of the abbey. The end of a thigh bone, nearly perished, was also discovered. The sarcophagus is seven feet in length, two feet six inches wide at the head, and two feet at the bottom; and seven inches and a half thick. It is carved round in columns, and iron rings are fixed in the sides, and at each end.

Several MSS. have lately been discovered in the house of Madame Lavater, belonging to her late husband.

A Greek literary society has been recently established at Athens. It is composed of the most distinguished native and foreign literati residing in that city.

JUST PUBLISHED.

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At a late meeting of the society for encouraging arts, manufactures, and commerce, in the Adelphi, London, the vice-president, J. C. Curwen, Esq. M. P. delivered to lieut.-colonel Bouchette, of Quebec, the gold medal voted to him by the society as a mark of its approbation of the skill and ability shown in the construction of his topographical map of Canada; he was also elected a corresponding member of the society.